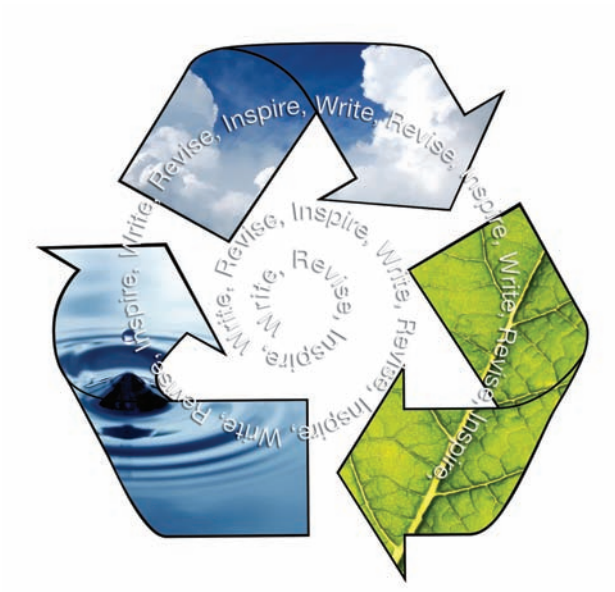
A WRITER'S WORKSHOP

Crafting Sentences, Building Paragraphs


Revise, Inspire, Write, Revise, Inspire, Write, Revise, Inspire, Write,

Green / Design Reviewers

Some reviewers offered specific feedback on the effectiveness of this book's design; many of these same instructors helped define the Brannan series' green mission, advising the author and editors on issues from production decisions to potential partnerships and specific content.

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Every year, McGraw-Hill conducts several Developmental Writing Symposia, which are attended by instructors across the country. These events are an opportunity for editors from McGraw-Hill to gather information about the needs and challenges of instructors teaching developmental writing courses. They also offer a forum for the attendees to exchange ideas and experiences with colleagues they might not have otherwise met. The feedback we have received has been invaluable and has contributed—directly or indirectly—to the development of *A Writer's Workshop* and its supplements.

Nellie Boyd, *Texas Southern University*
Joann Brown, *Miami-Dade Community College—North*
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Mary Warner, *Nashville State Technical Community College*
Arlene Weaver, *Wilbur Wright College*

Write. Revise. Inspire.

A Writer's Workshop

Crafting Sentences, Building Paragraphs

BRANNAN



Bob Brannan

Johnson County Community College
Overland Park, Kansas

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About the Author

BOB BRANNAN



Bob Brannan is a professor at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas, where he has taught composition for 17 years. He received his M.A. in composition/rhetoric from Iowa State University and began his teaching career as a "freeway flyer," shuttling between community colleges and carrying his office in a bag. Over the years, he has taught a number of writing classes—including developmental, first- and second-semester composition, business and technical writing, advanced composition, and honors seminars—but he focuses much of his attention on the pre-college-level writer. He is also the author of *A Writer's Workshop: Crafting Paragraphs, Building Essays*, now in its third edition.

When not working in a writing classroom, Bob spends much of his time with his family, often playing in the outdoors. In the late spring and summer, they can frequently be found kayaking down Ozark rivers in Missouri and Arkansas and hiking in the Rockies. Lauren, Bob's daughter, still enjoys climbing trees with him.

About This Book

OVERVIEW

A Writer's Workshop: Crafting Sentences, Building Paragraphs engages developing writers with a **hands-on, process-oriented, collaborative**, and **conscientious** approach to writing. Throughout, it **links lessons to previous experience and future application**, treating students as writers and writing as a dynamic process.

Hands On . . .

A Writer's Workshop advocates that the best way to learn to write well is by writing. This book offers a wealth of opportunities for students to write sentences and paragraphs about topics that interest them, encouraging writers to draw on their own experiences. Along the way, it provides both instruction on and practice using essential sentence grammar and punctuation skills that will help writers clearly express their ideas.

Process Oriented . . .

The text's central focus and user-friendly design ensure that "process" is more than a buzzword in writing *and* reading. The assignment chapters offer thorough process breakdowns, revision strategies, and **Journal/Blog prompts** in the context of actual assignments. Walk-throughs of student work include a variety of prewriting approaches and annotations that examine multiple drafts and stages of revision.



Collaborative . . .

Every chapter offers **Working Together** activities, opportunities for collaborative learning and practice. **Feedback** prompts in assignment chapters encourage workshopping at all stages of the writing process.

A Writer's Workshop is also offered as a paperless e-book.



Conscientious . . .

A Writer's Workshop is McGraw-Hill Higher Education's first "green" textbook. This approach is reflected in production materials, partnership, and content.

- **Green production materials:** Each book is produced using 10% recycled paper stock certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). The books are printed with soy inks.
- **Green partnership:** McGraw-Hill is pleased to announce that in the spirit of *A Writer's Workshop's* commitment to conservation, we are partnering with the

Arbor Day Foundation, the million-member nonprofit conservation and education organization, to plant 50,000 trees in our nation's forests (destroyed by insects, disease, and devastating wildfires) during the next three years. In addition, the book's website will be updated to list any local activities McGraw-Hill and the Arbor Day Foundation will be sponsoring to promote environmental awareness. Visit www.mhhe.com/brannan to see how many trees have been planted and learn how you can get involved and help make the world just a little bit greener.



- **Green Content:** *A Writer's Workshop* features a recurring theme of conservation, incorporating **Conservation in Context** activities, tips, writing assignments, and readings (such as Al Gore's Nobel Prize acceptance speech) reflecting a range of environmental topics. Conservation is a fitting focus for *A Writer's Workshop*, which motivates students to build on what they know with readily available tools—and to use their writing, reading, and studying energies wisely. Students are encouraged to try prewriting, drafting, and revising on the computer, saving not only paper but also money and time. Throughout this text, all prewriting samples are displayed as if they were on-screen, rather than in a handwriting font, showing that tech-savvy can also mean earth-friendly. Journal/Blog prompts are designed so that journals can be kept, shared, and graded online.

  At The McGraw-Hill Companies, environmental responsibility is an integral part of overall corporate citizenship. As such, we strive to minimize our environmental footprint by closely monitoring and developing strategies to reduce the environmental impact of our operations and our office facilities. This partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation and the content of *A Writer's Workshop* represent one step toward that goal; we hope that you will support this effort and encourage us with your feedback.



Linking to Previous and Future Experience . . .

In select chapters, **Linking to Previous Experience** sections help developing writers connect what they already know about processes and concepts to lessons in the book. **Linking to Future Experience** sections wrap up main points and tie writing skills and patterns to future applications, giving further purpose to what students are practicing.

Shortly after they leave this course, our students may find themselves wrestling with a researched argument in Comp I, a term paper in history, or perhaps a process description in a health sciences course. This text will help you to help your students do well in these and in all of their future writing projects.

ORGANIZATION

Unit 1

Preparing for Success engages students with the writing and reading process.

- **Chapter 1** focuses on the steps most writers use to discover, focus, and organize ideas and introduces overall strategies for revising and editing. It includes a student model walk-through and closes with diagnostic assignments.
- **Chapter 2** offers reading strategies useful in any college course: identifying topic and thesis sentences, analyzing a text for key examples, and rewording material (through summary or paraphrase) to make it a writer's own.

Unit 2

Crafting Sentences: Understanding How They Work explains and illustrates the parts of speech, showing how they combine to form phrases and clauses and how these sentence parts can be ordered through coordination and subordination. Grammar study is applied directly to students' own writing, with examples drawn from their daily lives.

Unit 3



Dealing with Common Sentence Problems offers students instruction in and examples for handling typical surface errors such as misplaced commas, comma splices, run-ons, and fragments. Cross-referenced **Hints** link surface errors to the more basic sentence grammar of Unit 2.

Unit 4

Building Paragraphs introduces students to the paragraph as the building block of composition.

- **Chapter 19** gives students an overview of paragraphs, how they are structured and developed, and how they fit into essays.
- **Chapter 20** offers detailed instruction for revising paragraphs in multiple drafts.

THE ASSIGNMENT CHAPTERS

- **Chapters 21–29** introduce nine patterns of development in the context of real writing assignments (see the box below).

SPECIAL FEATURES *of the Assignment Chapters*

- **Journal/Blog Entries and Feedback prompts encourage students to work individually and collaboratively to plan, develop, and improve writing assignments.**
- **Developing Skills and Discovering Ideas sections walk students through basic concepts, offering practice in skills needed to write effectively in each pattern of development.**
- **Two Student Models—One illustrates significant rhetorical points; the other addresses organization, development, and style through analytical questions.**
- **The Writing Assignment is located within a rhetorical context that asks students to think about their audience and purpose. Each assignment features the following components:**
  1. **Discovering Ideas include prewriting suggestions and a comprehensive "Possible Topics" list**
  2. **Organizing the Paragraph**
  3. **Drafting the Paragraph**
  4. **Revising the Paragraph: includes a specially tailored checklist for writers and peer reviewers to use.**

  Each section includes samples of model student prewriting, drafts, and revisions.
- **Alternate Assignments—give students additional focused topics and specific suggestions for developing them.**

Unit 5

Introducing the Essay helps students transition from writing paragraphs to essays.

- **Chapter 30** demonstrates how body paragraphs can grow into essays, leading students into "specialty" paragraphs, introductions, and conclusions.
- **Chapter 31** provides a model student essay for each pattern of development discussed in Unit 4.

Unit 6

Polishing Style offers suggestions students can use to improve their writing style through sentence variety and word choice.

Unit 7

Learning from Professional Readings includes nineteen professional readings from print and online sources; one piece, "Earth in the Beginning," features a companion photo essay. Students will find the reading topics current, interesting, and relevant. The collection includes a comparison between two superhero movies, a definition of "patriotism," and a persuasive call to address global climate change.

Additional exercises and quizzes are available on the book's Online Learning Center at www.mhhe.com/brannan, which also links to more than 3,000 practice opportunities on Gateway.



KEY FEATURES OF *A WRITER'S WORKSHOP*

- **Linking to Previous Experience, Linking to Future Experience.** All major chapters open with an overview asking students to link prior knowledge to recently acquired knowledge. Each paragraph-writing chapter calls upon this familiar ground as a point of entry through the **Linking to Previous Experience** feature, then closes with **Linking to Future Experience,** which explores this concept's usefulness beyond the course or classroom. In other chapters, the relevance of acquiring various skills is explored under the heading **What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?**
- **Activities.** Each chapter offers an array of practice opportunities, including collaborative and online exercises:
  - **Working Together Activities** suggest collaborative work within exercises. **Feedback** prompts encourage workshopping in pairs or small groups at all stages of the writing process.
  - **Working Online Activities** engage students with the book's website (www.mhhe.com/brannan) and other Internet sites for specific exercises and writing assignments. The online **Review Quiz** at the end of each chapter gives students a convenient way to test their understanding before moving on.
- **Conservation in Context.** Boxes, activities, or assignments suggest specific ways to discuss or practice conservation during the writing process. Readings, visuals, and examples explore environmentally themed topics such as alternative energy, global climate change, and over-fishing.
- **More than 200 possible writing topics** for **explained and illustrated assignments,** with additional **alternate assignments.** One alternate assignment per chapter is linked to an image or images, encouraging visual literacy and providing a helpful way in for visual learners.





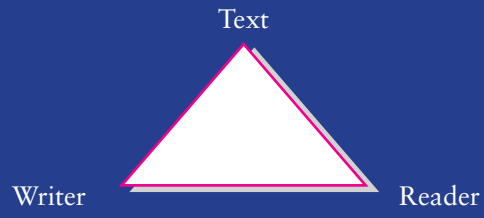




- **Journal and Blog Entries.** These prompts help students make the connection between the chapter assignment and their lives, calling for specific, detailed examples and reinforcing the integration of a writer's aims. In many entries, **Feedback** prompts encourage workshopping drafts in groups and commenting on classmates' posts or drafts.
- **Hints.** Useful marginal suggestions and cross-references connect paragraph process to sentence skills and reading strategies to professional models.
- **English Review Notes.** In the book's margins, these tips provide in-context helpful guidance for nonnative speakers. Additional student resources include a focused chapter, **ESL Concerns,** and in-depth explanations of grammar concepts throughout the text.

SPECIAL FEATURES *for Instructors*

1. **Flexibility in teaching approaches. This text offers a great deal of explicit instruction on fundamental sentence grammar and mechanics, giving instructors the tools they need to help their students overcome sentence-level difficulties. However, as a fully developed composition book, *A Writer's Workshop* encourages instructors to integrate grammar and mechanics into meaningful writing assignments so that students have a real context in which to develop their skills in standard edited English.**
2. **Instruction linked to a rhetorical context. Writing assignments are grounded in the rhetorical triangle: text, writer, and reader, paying particular attention to audience:**



Supplements Package

Supplements for Instructors

- **Annotated Instructor's Edition (ISBN 978-0-07-335028-8, MHID 0-07-335028-1).** The teaching edition of ***A Writer's Workshop*** consists of the student text with embedded answers to activities. Marginal **Teaching Ideas** on almost every page provide suggestions for using the text in class.
- **Online Learning Center** (www.mhhe.com/brannan). This companion website offers password-protected instructional aids and resources. Among other features, this includes the **Instructor's Manual** written by Bob Brannan. This guide provides comprehensive commentary on every chapter, sample syllabi, alternative writing assignments, peer response worksheets, and more.

Supplements for Students

✔ **FREE Online Learning Center** (www.mhhe.com/brannan). ***A Writer's Workshop's*** companion website, powered by Catalyst 2.0, offers a host of instructional aids and additional resources for students, including grammar exercises with feedback, writing activities for additional practice, guides to doing research on the Internet and avoiding plagiarism, useful Web links, an online chapter: "The Learning Process: Effective Study Skills," and more.

✔ **FREE access to GATEWAY**, the self-paced tutorial carefully crafted to strengthen and expand students' writing and editing. It is the ultimate resource for grammar and usage instruction. Offering **over 3,000 exercises and quiz questions** for additional practice in basic grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling, and techniques for effective writing, this new program allows for the user to practice at his or her pace. **GATEWAY** makes writing and editing meaningful!

✔ **Additional Supplements.** See www.mhhe.com/brannan for more on: Passport for College Writing / Catalyst 3.0 / *The New McGraw-Hill Exercise Book* by Santi Buscemi / *The McGraw-Hill Exercise Book for Multilingual Writers* by Maggie Sokolik / *A Writer's Journal* by Lynee Gaillet / *The McGraw-Hill Student Planner*

✔ **Dictionary and Vocabulary Resources.** We also carry a full line of Merriam-Webster reference books. To find the right one for your students, visit www.mhhe.com/brannan.

E-Book Alternative

Paperless eTextbook

✔ **CourseSmart** is a new way to find and buy eTextbooks—including *A Writer's Workshop*. At CourseSmart you can save up to 50% off the cost of a print textbook, reduce your impact on the environment, and gain access to powerful Web tools for learning. CourseSmart has the largest selection of eTextbooks available anywhere, offering thousands of the most commonly adopted textbooks from a wide variety of higher education publishers. CourseSmart eTextbooks are available in one standard online reader with full text search, notes and highlighting, and email tools for sharing notes between classmates. For further details, contact your sales representative or go to www.coursesmart.com.

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The two most important people in my life I have saved for last: my wife, Beth, and my daughter, Lauren. They have had to endure my many absences from their lives as I have closeted myself, growling at their invitations to pretend, for an hour or so, to be a real human. Beth has carried more than her share of the parenting load and missed more than a few dates with me during this process, but she hasn't kicked me out yet, so I still have hope. Lauren has grown into a beautiful 12-year-old who can't well remember a time when her dad hasn't been busier with his books than perhaps he should have been. Beth and Lauren, I love both of you deeply. Thank you for being part of my life.

Bob Brannan

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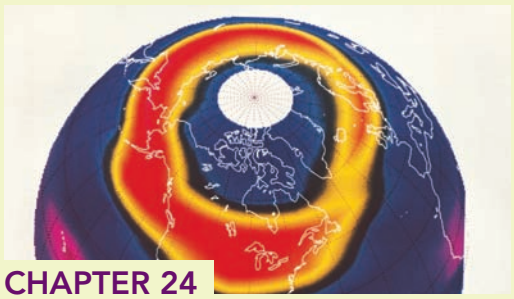
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BRANNAN



The Writing Process

1

[*Imagine you are piloting this hot air balloon. Even if it's your first time, you took many steps to prepare for this journey. As the ground recedes and the wind rushes past, consider how successful your organizing was. What surprises may await before the balloon descends? When approaching a writing assignment, how are you already prepared? What kinds of planning might you do before writing the actual paper?*]



KEY TOPICS

- How do we begin to write?
- What to ask at the start of a writing project
- Steps in the writing process
  - Discovering ideas
  - Organizing ideas
  - Drafting
  - Revising
  - Editing
  - Proofreading

How Do We Begin to Write?

One answer to the question "How do we begin to write?" is that we *continue* rather than *begin*. We have been writing in various ways for many years: school papers and exams, letters and e-mails to friends, text messages, invitations and cards, directions, instructions for completing projects, and more. Not long after we could speak fluently, we began acquiring a writing "vocabulary" too. As we grew, this vocabulary expanded, and we learned to organize these new words in different ways, forming sentences that no longer simply mirrored our spoken words. We are all competent speakers and can write with varying degrees of proficiency. Our task in this and later chapters is to build on skills you already have, to help you more effectively discover ideas and then focus, organize, develop, and edit them.

What to Ask at the Start of a Writing Project

What Is My Purpose?

We always write for a reason, whether we are conscious of it or not. However, knowing the reason up front will help you stay focused. People primarily write to entertain, inform, or persuade a reader, but there are other reasons: to explore an idea, record a memory, vent frustrations, and more.

Who Is My Audience?

Unless you are writing in your diary, you are probably trying to communicate to some specific person or persons beyond yourself. This is good. Knowing your audience—as specifically as possible, right down to a single person—will help you discover, focus, and develop your ideas.

What, Exactly, Is the Project?

When you have an assigned writing task, it is essential to learn all you can about how to approach and complete it. Your instructor may give you written instructions, or you may follow the directions in the assignment chapters of this book. In either case, learn the assignment's purpose, audience, overall organization, length, and draft due dates.

How Can I Develop a Real Interest in the Project?

The truth is that writing is work, and most people don't want extra work. We're busy enough. However, much of what we do requires work, even our leisure activities: planning a vacation, tossing a Frisbee in the park, swimming, dancing at a concert. It's not so much the work as the *attitude* we have toward it. Think about that friend who practices her guitar two hours daily or the one who carries his 50-pound pack in the Montana wilderness for a week and calls that fun!

If you can find something to care about in each topic you choose this semester, you will enjoy your writing more, learn more, create more interesting work, and probably end up with a better grade.

STEPS IN THE WRITING PROCESS

As writers, we need a process to carry out our writing projects successfully, just as workers need a step-by-step building process to put up a house. It makes sense to lay down a foundation before trying to put up walls or a roof, right? The following box outlines the steps in a standard **writing process.** The order of the steps, however, is not rigid: for example, you may need to create more material as you revise, and you may edit some as you draft.

HINT

Remember that you may continue to discover ideas even during revision; the order of steps is not fixed.

THE WRITING PROCESS

1. Discover ideas
2. Organize ideas
3. Draft
4. Revise
5. Edit
6. Proofread

This chapter walks you through each step of the writing process. We'll examine a student model—"The Trail of Blood," by Kyle Burnett—in stages to illustrate the progression from discovering ideas to proofreading. Turn to page 18 to see the final draft of this model paragraph.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting

If you have ever sat in front of a blank sheet of paper or stared at the blinking cursor on an empty screen, you know how frustrating it can be to find and then develop a writing topic. To get past the blank page, we need methods to help shake loose ideas. The next few pages will show you seven of these **prewriting** methods and how they can be used to develop a paragraph like "The Trail of Blood" (pp. 20–21).

PREWRITING TECHNIQUES

1. Freewriting
2. Clustering
3. Brainstorming (or listing)
4. Asking a journalist's questions
5. Using patterns of development
6. Writing journal/blog entries
7. Considering audience

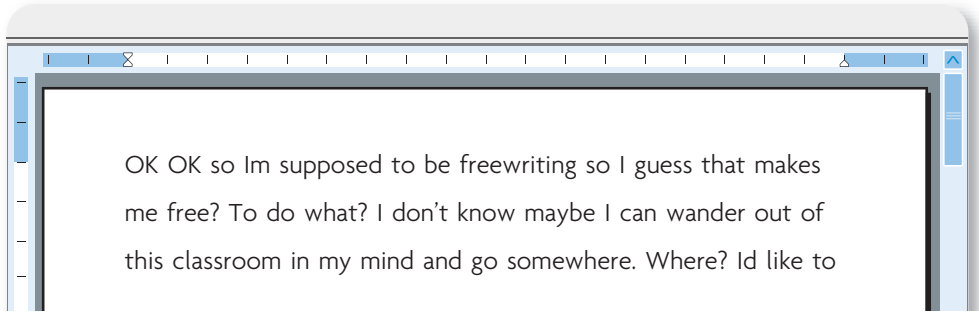
English Review Note

Prewriting is a good opportunity for you to explore what you already know about a topic. If you can't think of a word in English, leave a blank or write the word in your native language for now.

Freewriting

Freewriting is quick, uncensored writing that may carry you into a first draft. The point of freewriting is to get words on paper so that you may see a topic or pattern of ideas surface. It's a bit like talking to yourself in writing. To freewrite, give yourself 5 to 10 minutes to write nonstop, without judging your ideas or worrying about editing. Even if you run out of ideas, keep writing. You may produce sentences like these:

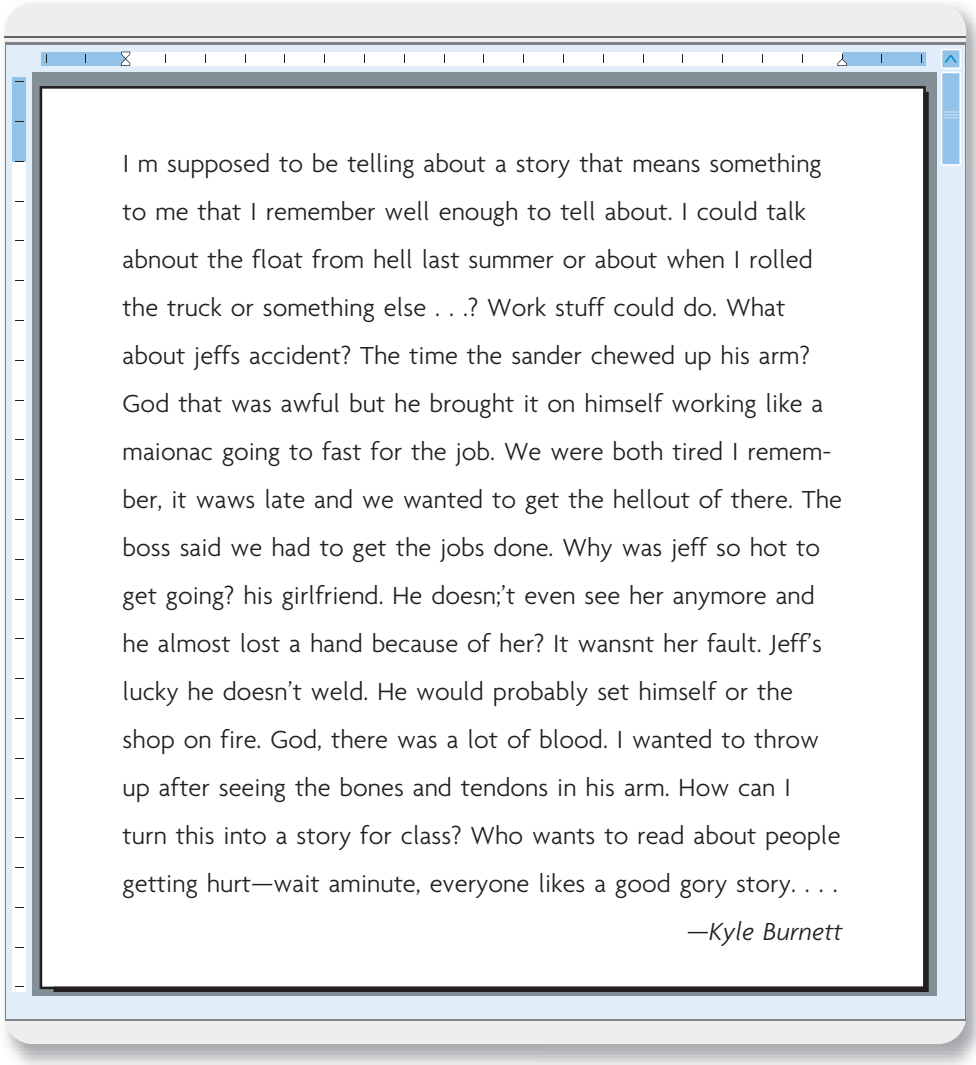
SAMPLE FREEWRITE



be on a river like the Eleven Point catching smallmouth and rainbows but that's not happening. Too much work this weekend at the shop. More sweating and sparks flying. I hope there aren't any more accidents. Check the clock, geez, 6 more iminutes to work on this freewrite. . . . !

This short freewrite suggests topics of fishing or work, but the writer might also develop the idea of wanting to be anywhere else *but* school!

If you have a general idea of your topic, you may get better results from a **focused freewrite** like the following:



I m supposed to be telling about a story that means something to me that I remember well enough to tell about. I could talk abnout the float from hell last summer or about when I rolled the truck or something else . . .? Work stuff could do. What about jeffs accident? The time the sander chewed up his arm? God that was awful but he brought it on himself working like a maionac going to fast for the job. We were both tired I remember, it waws late and we wanted to get the hellout of there. The boss said we had to get the jobs done. Why was jeff so hot to get going? his girlfriend. He doesn;'t even see her anymore and he almost lost a hand because of her? It wansnt her fault. Jeff's lucky he doesn't weld. He would probably set himself or the shop on fire. God, there was a lot of blood. I wanted to throw up after seeing the bones and tendons in his arm. How can I turn this into a story for class? Who wants to read about people getting hurt—wait aminute, everyone likes a good gory story. . . .

—Kyle Burnett

SAMPLE FOCUSED FREEWRITE

Kyle's focused freewrite about a shop accident produced some good details, which the author was able to include later when he drafted his paragraph (see p. 14).

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ACTIVITY 1.1 *Focused Freewriting*

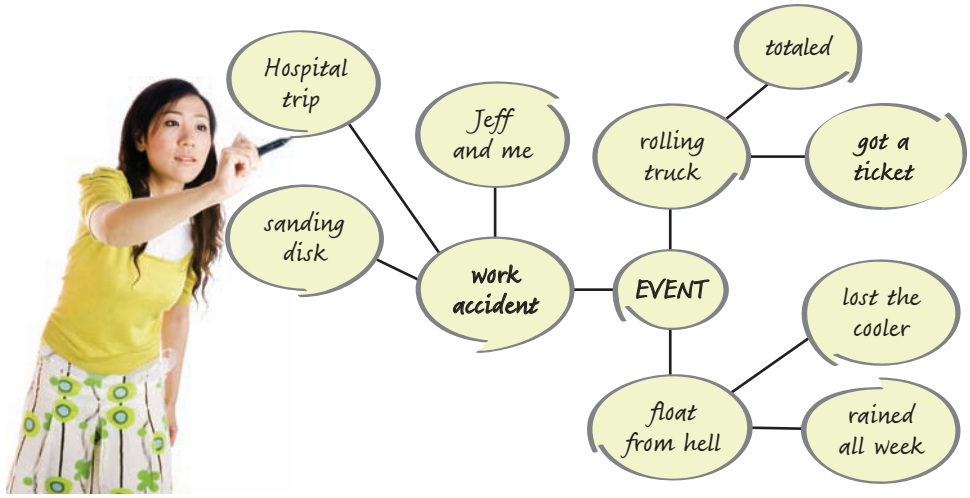
Choose a topic from the following list, and write nonstop on it for 5 minutes. Don't worry about grammar, spelling, punctuation, or tangled ideas. Just keep writing.

- **Places to describe:** a room in your house, a gym, a bowling alley, a restaurant, a cafeteria, an airport, a subway station
- **Events to tell about:** an embarrassing or tragic moment, an accident, a work problem, a public confrontation
- **Ideas to explain:** qualities of a good parent, teacher, coach, or sibling; a hobby, sport, talent, game, or activity you enjoy; difficulties of being a college student

Clustering

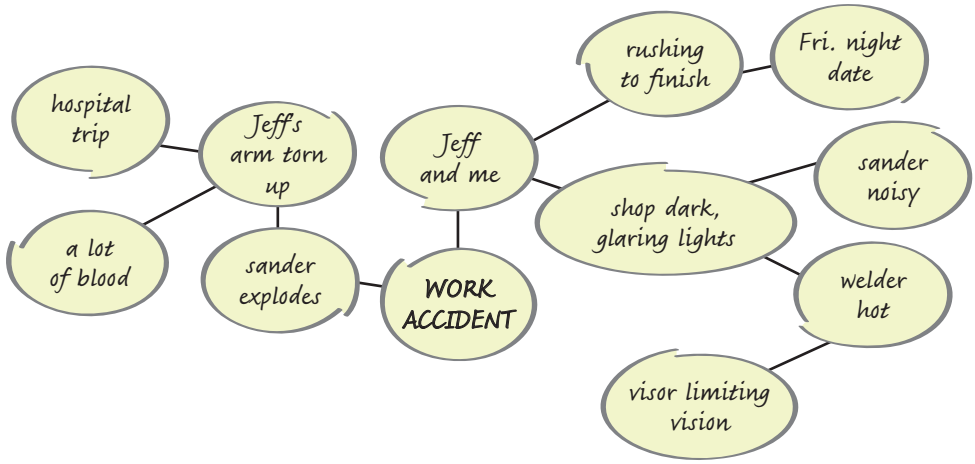
Clustering is a prewriting method that involves listing a single word in the center of a page and then adding any words that the center word brings to mind. After linking several words to the original word, you connect more words to the second set. Keep extending your network of linked words until you find a grouping that seems interesting, as in the example cluster below from "The Trail of Blood."

SAMPLE CLUSTER



If Kyle chose the "work accident" cluster, he could create a more **focused cluster** like the following:

FOCUSED CLUSTER



Now, the author has many details with which to organize and then begin a first draft.

ACTIVITY 1.2 *Focused Clustering*

Choose a topic from the list in Activity 1.1 (or continue with the one you have already chosen), and create a focused cluster. Use the "work accident" example as a model. Try to fill a page with word associations.

ACTIVITY 1.3 WORKING ONLINE: *Online Clustering*



As an alternative to Activity 1.2, visit http://bubbl.us/edit.php to create your cluster (or idea map) online. You can color-code your cluster and choose from a variety of "bubble" shapes and structures. When you're done, save and print or post your cluster. Return to this site when you're exploring ideas for your next paragraph or essay assignment.

ACTIVITY 1.4 WORKING ONLINE: *Browsing for Ideas*



Using Google or another search engine, choose a key word or phrase from your focused freewrite (in Activity 1.1) or cluster (in Activity 1.2 or 1.3) and explore your topic online. What sites do you find? Are they interesting and relevant to your topic? If so, how might they help you focus or further explore it? Limit your browsing to under 10 minutes.

Brainstorming (Listing)

In **brainstorming** or **listing,** the writer makes a list of words and phrases that relate to the topic. Drawing information from his focused cluster (p. 6), Kyle could create this list:

Event: Automotive Shop Accident	
Jeff and me alone	Shouting back and forth
Fri. night	Hearing the sander disk explode
Jeff rushing	Seeing Jeff's arm
Noisy sander	Rushing to the hospital
Hot arc welder	No permanent damage

To create more specific details for scene and character development, the author could write out a **focused list** like this:

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Describe shop	Describe the action	Tell my thoughts/ feelings
Auto repair shop: 50-75'	Welding and sanding alone	Anxious to leave
Concrete floors	Rushing the work	Careful with welder
Bare hanging electric lights	Sander disk exploding	Jeff should slow down
Night	Jeff injured	Thinking oh-oh, accident
Empty	Rushing to the hospital	Feeling sick

Often after you have written a list, it will serve as a rough outline from which you can then add, rearrange, or cut details.

ACTIVITY 1.5 *Focused Brainstorming (Listing)*

Choose a topic from the list in Activity 1.1 (or continue with the one you have already chosen), and create a focused list, as in the preceding example. Use specific details.

Asking a Journalist's Questions

When you have a fairly specific topic (especially a narrative), you can often create useful material from the journalist's questions of *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*; and you can add *how* and *what was the result*. Here is an example from "The Trail of Blood":

Who: Jeff and me

What: Jeff's shop accident

When: last June at 9:00 PM

Where: Ray's Automotive

Why: trying to rush the job

How: sanding disk hung up on a metal edge

What was the result: Damage to Jeff's arm

ACTIVITY 1.6 *Journalist's Questions*

Choose a topic from the list in Activity 1.1 (or continue with the one you have already chosen), and write a list of answers to the journalist's questions, as in the preceding example.

ACTIVITY 1.7 WORKING TOGETHER: *Talking Through the Journalist's Questions*



As an alternative to Activity 1.6, divide into pairs and ask your writing partner the journalist's questions, as a reporter would. The writer should focus on verbally expressing his or her answers, while you, the journalist, make note of them. Then switch places and exchange notes.



Using Patterns of Development

Another prewriting method is to turn one or more of the **patterns of development** (listed below) into questions and then apply them to a topic.

NINE PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT

- **Narration** (Chapter 22): telling a brief story to make a point
- **Description** (Chapter 21): using vivid details to paint a picture
- **Illustration** (Chapter 23): giving examples to back up a point
- **Comparison/contrast** (Chapter 26): showing how your subject is like or unlike similar subjects
- **Classification/division** (Chapter 27): putting your subject into a group or breaking it into parts
- **Cause/effect** (Chapter 24): telling what actions can affect your subject and what effects can flow from it
- **Process analysis** (Chapter 25): explaining how your subject works
- **Definition** (Chapter 28): exploring the essential characteristics or various meanings of your subject
- **Persuasion** (Chapter 29): trying to change the way someone thinks or acts

Here is how Kyle used several of these patterns to form and answer questions about his topic:

1. **Narration:** What kind of story can I tell to make a point about how dangerous it is to work too fast on the job?
2. **Description:** What kinds of details can I give to paint a picture of the shop and Jeff?

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3. **Cause/effect:** How can I be clear about the cause of Jeff's accident and how he was later affected by it?
4. **Process analysis:** How much should I explain about the jobs of sanding and welding?

English Review Note

Feel free to express experiences you would naturally write about in your native language.

ACTIVITY 1.8 *Patterns of Development*

Choose a topic from the list in Activity 1.1 (or continue with the one you have already chosen), and write a question, like those in the previous example, for each of the patterns of development. Then answer each question in a sentence or two. Be specific.

Writing Journal/Blog Entries

The **journal/blog entries** in Unit Four's assignment chapters can also help you discover ideas (as well as focus, organize, develop, and edit them). It's worth your time to answer the entry prompts as thoroughly as you can. If you find yourself avoiding the entries or being unable to answer them specifically, you may be falling behind on the assignment.

Conservation in Context

KEEP A PAPERLESS JOURNAL OR BLOG

Consider saving paper waste by keeping a paperless journal on your computer or online. If you keep a blog, you can also take advantage of the interactive journaling feature "Feedback" throughout Unit Four.

Considering Audience

Knowing who will read your work will help you define terms, choose and detail examples, and give the right depth of explanation. General audiences can understand and appreciate much that is written, but specific audiences are often attracted to specialized writing that speaks to their concerns.

Imagine, for instance, if Kyle Burnett had filled his paragraph, "The Trail of Blood," with technical terms common to arc welders, such as *ampere, carbon steel, constant current, base material, alternating current,* and *electrodes*? His target audience (his classmates) might have easily lost the thread of his accident story. Yet, if Kyle was writing for other welders, those terms would be shared knowledge and so might have brought him closer to his readers.

Here are a few ways to describe an audience:

age	race/ethnicity	political affiliation
country, region, city, neighborhood	general or specific knowledge of a subject	special interests: hobbies, sports, art forms, etc.
education	level of intelligence	prejudices
occupation	religion	needs

ACTIVITY 1.9 *Audience Consideration*

Choose a topic from the list in Activity 1.1 (or continue with the one you have already chosen). Assume that your audience is *unfamiliar with your topic.* On a separate sheet of paper, list four terms this audience might need to know more about—to help them understand the topic or why you are writing about it. Next, tell how and why you would explain these terms.

Organizing Ideas

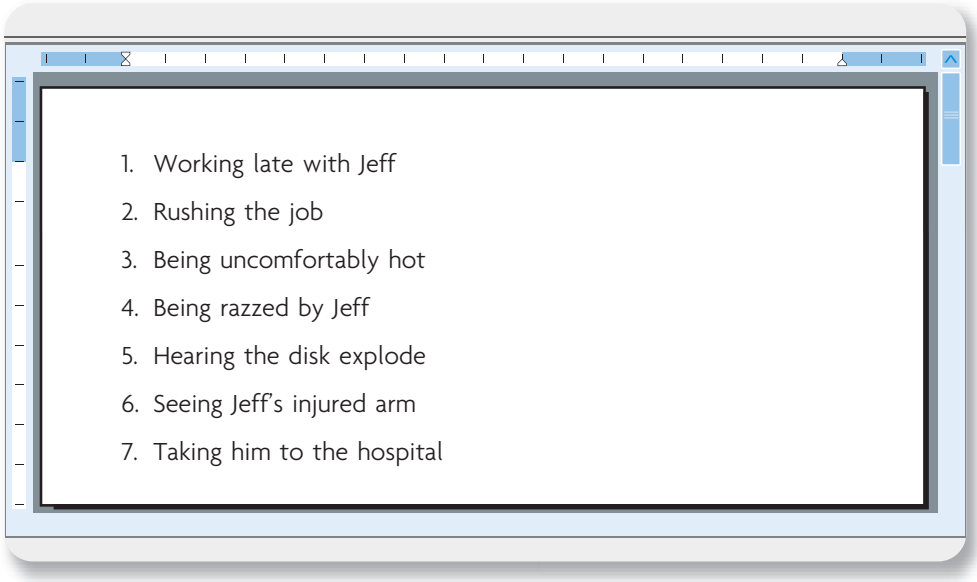
After you have found a topic and have some sense of direction for it, you should focus it further so that it can be developed within one paragraph. An effective way to do this is to write a **topic sentence,** meaning a sentence that names the topic and limits it with a statement. (See pp. 276–279 for more on topic sentences.) Here is the topic sentence from "The Trail of Blood," with the topic underlined once and the limiting statement twice:

> The night a sanding disk exploded at the automotive shop where I work,
> I learned how dangerous the job can be.

The focusing statement will help you decide what examples and details to keep and what more might be needed. The next step is often to try an outline.

Rough Outlines

A **rough outline** is usually just a simple list of ideas. Narrative writing organizes its details chronologically (by time), as you can see from the rough outline below of "The Trail of Blood":



ROUGH OUTLINE

These points give us a place to start writing. From here, we can cut or add necessary material and consider further what an audience might be interested in.

ACTIVITY 1.10 *Patterns of Development*

Create a rough outline for the list you wrote in Activity 1.3. Stories will be arranged by time, descriptions by space (details from front to back, side to side, far to near, and so forth), and information by importance (the least important example first, moving to the most important one last).

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Formal Outlines

More-formal outlines are particularly useful for longer writing projects. When you move into essay writing, you might try one. Note the pattern of a formal outline:

FORMAL OUTLINE FOR AN ESSAY

Thesis statement (controlling idea of essay)

Paragraph 1

I. First topic sentence (first main supporting idea)
   A. First supporting example
      1. First specific supporting detail
      2. Second specific supporting detail
         a. Additional supporting detail
         b. Additional supporting detail

Paragraph 2

   B. Second supporting example
      1. First specific supporting detail
      2. Second specific supporting detail

II. Second topic sentence (second main supporting idea)
(Repeat pattern from I for the length of the essay.)

English Review Note

The development of a paragraph or essay may differ in other languages or cultures. Let your instructor know if you want more direct instruction or practice opportunities.

Here is how we can apply this outline format to an essay that contrasts a dog and a cat as pets. (See "Under Attack," pp. 480–481.)

MODEL STUDENT OUTLINE

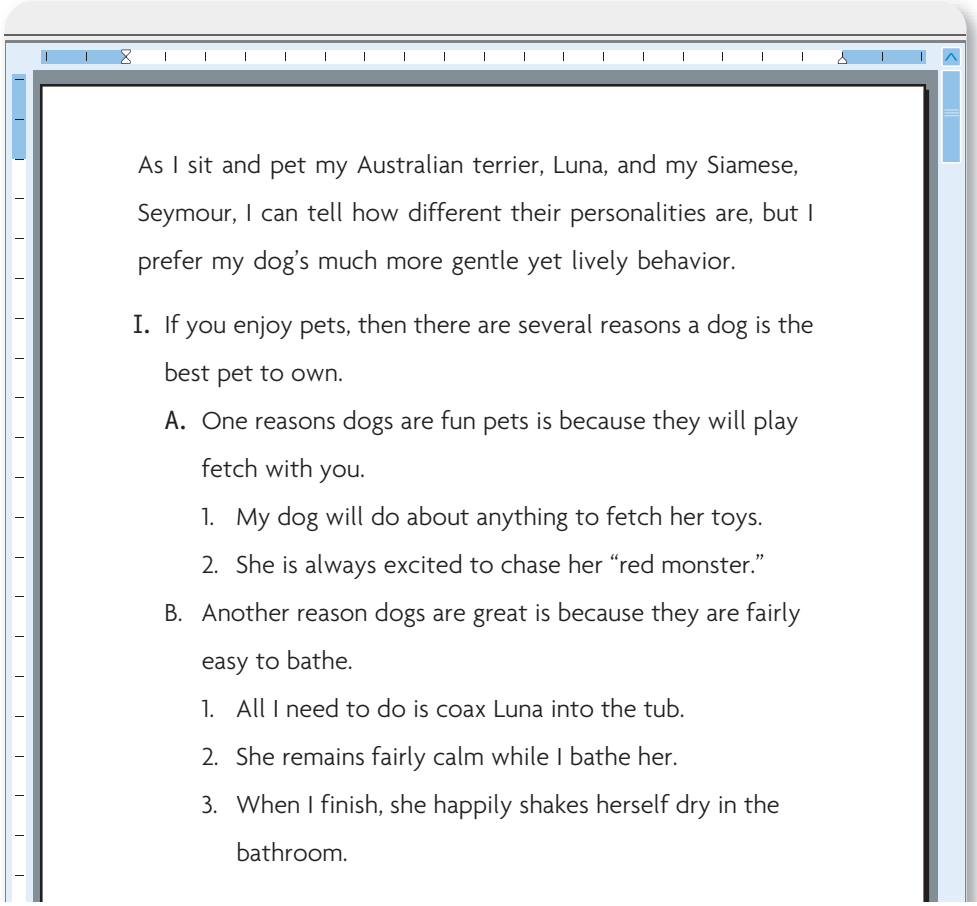
Thesis statement

First topic sentence

First supporting example

First specific supporting detail

Second specific supporting detail



As I sit and pet my Australian terrier, Luna, and my Siamese, Seymour, I can tell how different their personalities are, but I prefer my dog's much more gentle yet lively behavior.

I. If you enjoy pets, then there are several reasons a dog is the best pet to own.
   A. One reasons dogs are fun pets is because they will play fetch with you.
      1. My dog will do about anything to fetch her toys.
      2. She is always excited to chase her "red monster."
   B. Another reason dogs are great is because they are fairly easy to bathe.
      1. All I need to do is coax Luna into the tub.
      2. She remains fairly calm while I bathe her.
      3. When I finish, she happily shakes herself dry in the bathroom.

C. One of the best reasons for choosing dogs as pets is that they go to the bathroom outside.

1. Luna tells me when she needs to go.
2. She goes out and does her business without needing me to be there or clean up after her.

II. On the other hand, cats like Seymour can be difficult pets.

A. Seymour won't fetch anything.

1. All he will play with is his pink fish.
2. Just as often, he bites my arm.

B. This cat is a monster to bathe.

1. Getting him into the tub is easy, but then look out!
2. When the water comes on, Seymour runs for the door.
3. He claws me while I bathe and finally dry him.

C But the worst problem of living with a cat is the stinky litter box.

1. Seymour's box stinks no matter how often I change the litter.
2. He scatters the litter onto the floor, making a mess.

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Drafting

With your material in hand and the overall shape of your paper determined, you can confidently begin the *first* draft. More drafts will follow.

Preparing a Workspace

Before drafting, why not set up a workspace that will help you write? Some people are comfortable working around noise and activity, but many aren't. If you need quiet, find a quiet spot (a library?). Give yourself enough time to get something done. If 30 minutes is enough, great, but keep yourself on task the whole time. Decide what else might help you to be productive: food, soda, coffee, music? Do you work best curled up in bed with a pencil, paper, and clipboard; or do you like to be in front of your computer? Make your work easier by creating a space that encourages you to write.

Moving Ahead

As you write, focus on your main idea, purpose, and audience. Try to keep writing, even when you know a sentence isn't quite right. Reread your sentences as you go, to keep yourself from drifting too far off course, but at this point, focus your review of sentences on ideas, not grammar. Are the ideas flowing one to the next, and are they explained so that a reader can understand them? Feel free to edit a bit as you write, but don't lose the thread of your ideas over a misspelled word. Thorough editing will be important later.



[Describe your ideal writing space.]

Good writing is not usually easy. The writing process challenges us all to overcome problems in our own ways. If you are a fast writer whose work seems unfocused, you may need to slow down. Alternately, you may write so slowly that you can't meet deadlines and so need to speed up.

Conservation in Context

TRY PAPERLESS DRAFTING

If you usually write on paper but aren't making much progress, try drafting on a computer. This method also saves paper and money. ●

Sometimes it's difficult to resume writing a draft we haven't worked on for a few days. Make starting again easier: before you put a draft aside, leave yourself some notes about where you want it to go. Or try stopping the draft in mid sentence.

Resist the impulse to be overly critical of **rough drafts.** They are just that—works in progress. You will have the chance to be more critical during revision.

If you reach a time when words won't come, here are several solutions for breaking out of **writer's block:**

1. Write out your topic sentence at the top of the page and review it often. It will keep you from drifting.
2. Try any of the discovery methods listed in this chapter (clustering, listing, and so forth).
3. Talk to yourself in writing about the problems holding you back.
4. Talk to yourself out loud or to another person. Just having someone else listen can help clarify a fuzzy idea or give you a new direction.
5. Read the models and review the skills sections in this text. They will show you how others have overcome common writing difficulties.
6. Try some throw-away writing. Allow yourself to write awkward, incomplete, messy sentences. Move ahead with these sentences knowing that you will throw most or all of them away. The point here is just to get you writing again.
7. Take a break. Sometimes a 10-minute trip to the kitchen is just what you need; at other times it may take a day or two, thinking about the paper only occasionally.

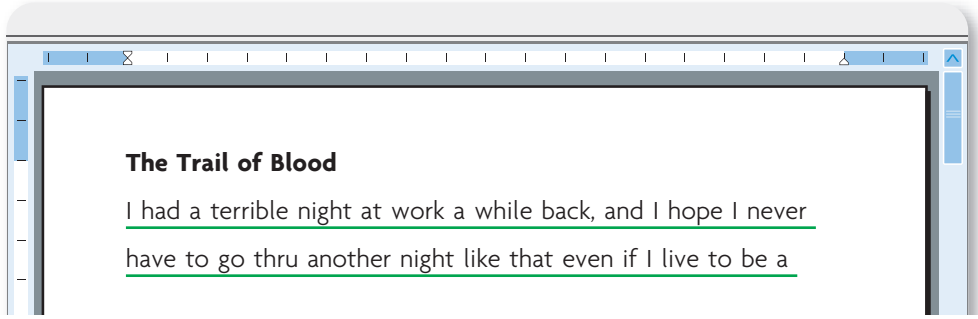
English Review Note

Writing many drafts is not a sign of "weak" writing or language skills.

ACTIVITY 1.11 *Drafting*

Following the guidelines above, select any of the topics you have developed so far, write a topic sentence, and then write a rough draft of around 200 words. Remember not to be overly concerned with grammar, spelling, or punctuation at this point in the process. Note how Kyle Burnett, the student author of "The Trail of Blood," managed his first draft.

KYLE'S FIRST DRAFT



hundred. My friend, and I were working late and I was welding and he was sanding an old car. There were shadows around the shop. I was sweating in my gloves but being careful because welding is hot! Jeff was racing along at his job. He called over to me, "You'll be here till midnight if you don't get on it." I nodded, through he couldn't see me, and kept welding. "You just keep it up, hotdog," I said to him, "see if you don't burn through that fender." I heard the sanding disk catch on the metal. I though, "Serves him right." The shop was almost quiet with the sander off, accept for the hum of my welder. Jeff call my name. The tone said trouble. Raising my hood I walked toward him. His back was to me and, he was looking down. Just behind him was the grinder, on its side. Then I saw blood drops leading to Jeff. "Jeff, what the hell." But I stopped when I saw the damage. Blood was all over his shirt and his wrist was sliced open. There was also a black mark on his arm. I grabbed him by the other arm and said, "We need to get to a hospital." We left all the shop stuff lying where we had dropped it, and got out to my truck in a hurry. I didn't even lock up. And I was luck that no one decided to stop off for some expensive power tools because there are thousands of dollars worth lying around for the taking. I made it to the hospital fast, and the doctor's and nurses' took took care of him their. Jeff was lucky, he always seemed to be. He was only out of work for three weeks, and their was no lasting damage. But that night we both learned to slow down when messing around with dangrous machines.

—Kyle Burnett

Kyle's topic sentence introduces the subject of the paragraph (a terrible night at work) and makes an emotional connection.

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Revising

Going easy on yourself is important while drafting, but revising requires a different approach. To revise effectively requires a critical (but not negative) frame of mind and a willingness to look closely at your work, knowing that it can be improved. When you revise, you look for opportunities to add, shift, and cut material. Remember that revising is not easy. It takes time to learn what to look for, gain insight into what you want to say, and let go of words and sentences—sometimes even whole drafts—that aren't working. However, if you invest the time and view your work critically, it will improve.

After you have finished your first draft, take some time away from it (a day or more). Think again about your point, purpose, and audience. Then reread your draft critically, using the following Revision Priority Checklist to help you revise it.

REVISION PRIORITY CHECKLIST

1. **Content: The content of your work is the most important feature.**
   - ☐ Check your ideas for clarity: Can you and other readers understand your point?
   - ☐ Be sure you have enough examples and details to convey your meaning and satisfy the reader's curosity.
   - ☐ Check for unnecessary points, examples, or details—anything that is repetitive or will distract readers from the central idea.
2. **Organization: Make sure your readers can follow your ideas.**
   - ☐ Check your topic or thesis sentence to see if it still clearly guides your reader.
   - ☐ Review the overall organizational pattern. If you chose a spatial arrangement, for instance, make sure you have been consistent in ordering details.
   - ☐ Look closely at how your sentences and paragraphs flow together. If transitions or other connectors are needed, use them.
   - ☐ Check your ending. Does it link to the main point of your paper and leave the reader with something to reflect on?
3. **Style: Word choice and arrangement can make writing easy or difficult to follow.**
   - ☐ What words are not working well?
   - ☐ Is your meaning unclear?
   - ☐ Do you repeat words unnecessarily?
   - ☐ Do you have enough variety in the length, type, and beginnings of your sentences?
   - ☐ Where can you tighten sentences, eliminating words that serve no purpose?
4. **Mechanics: The last elements to check in your paper are grammar, spelling, and punctuation.**
   - ☐ When you move into more polished drafts, edit out important errors that keep you from communicating clearly. Note this chapter's sections on Editing and Proofreading.



Work with your instructor to create a rubric for ESL errors.



As you practice revising, you will get better at it. Moving slowly through your drafts and focusing on one category to revise at a time will make this process more manageable.

Collaborative Revising

In the past, have you tried to revise by yourself without much luck? Fortunately, in your writing class you will have the help of fellow students and your instructor.

To profit most from collaborative work, you should be open to constructive criticism. Although none of the students in your group is an English teacher, you don't have to be an expert to respond to each others' drafts. Just letting a student author know that an idea is unclear or that a paragraph seems to be drifting can be important help.

Each assignment chapter in this book gives advice on discovering ideas, organizing, drafting, and beginning to revise. Also, Chapter 20 offers thorough step-by-step suggestions for improving your drafts. However, for some general suggestions to make group revising productive, read through the following lists:



Use constructive criticism to help you revise. You don't have to be an English whiz to help others improve their writing.

How the Writer Can Help the Reader

1. In a sentence or two at the top of your draft, identify your audience and purpose.
2. Tell your reader your main point.
3. Direct the reader to any part of the paper you have specific concerns about. For example: "I'm not sure about my topic sentence. Does it tell you what I think the main point is?" Or "Do you think I might have too many details about sound in the first half of the paragraph?"
4. After your paper has been read, listen carefully to the reader's responses, and then ask for clarification of any points you didn't understand.
5. Remember not to let a reader overwhelm you. Be selective in the advice you follow. Have several other readers respond to suggestions for revision, especially if a suggestion feels wrong for your paper.

How the Reader Can Help the Writer

1. Ask about the audience, purpose, and main point.
2. Read the draft quickly. Next, tell what you *liked* or thought the author did well.
3. Answer any questions the author has about the draft.
4. Reread the draft again slowly, using the revision checklists in Chapter 20. Jot notes in the margins of the paper. A helpful shorthand is to draw a straight line under words, phrases, and sentences that you particularly like and a wavy line under any parts that seem questionable.
5. Talk to the writer. Share your reactions honestly. Remember, neither of you should expect the other to be the "teacher." Your job is just to give the best response you can as you understand the assignment instructions.
6. Role-play the designated audience as you read, and respond as you think that person or group would.

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ACTIVITY 1.12 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Revising and Workshopping***



Get together with one or more group members and trade drafts. Using the preceding lists, offer each other comments and suggestions that will help the writers produce better developed and more clearly written drafts. Note how the following student model was revised for content, organization, and style concerns.



KYLE'S REVISED DRAFT: A MODEL

Editing for organization . . .

The topic and concluding sentences are revised for clarity and interest.

Sentence connectors are added for smoother time transitions.

Editing for content . . .

Useful material is added to increase the suspense and clarify the auto workshop setting.

~~Unneeded blocks of information~~ are lined through (cut).

Editing for style . . .

General words are replaced with specific ones.

More active verbs and -ing words are used.

~~Redundant words~~ are cut.

The Trail of Blood

The night a sanding disk exploded at the automotive shop where I work, I learned how dangerous the job can be. My friend Jeff and I were working late Friday night and he especially was in a hurry, since he was two hour's late to meet his girlfriend. I was welding an axle and he was sanding a '75 Corvette. The electric lights hanging from cords spotlighted us and cast deep shadows around the rest of the shop. I was sweating in my heavy welding gloves and hood but being careful, 1000 degrees is a lot of heat to make a mistake with. Jeff, though, was racing along. He called over to me, "Kyle, you're a slug. You'll be here till midnight if you don't get on it." I nodded, through he couldn't see me, and kept the arc on the bead. "You just keep it up, hotdog," I said to him, "see if you don't burn through that fender." That's when, over the sizzle of the Miller welder and the roar of the grinder. I heard the sanding disk catch on the metal and explode. I though to myself, "Serves him right. As soon as I'm done with this, I'll razz him." The shop was almost quiet with the sander off, accept for the hum of my welder. Then I heard Jeff, in a weak, tight voice, call my name. The tone said trouble. Raising my hood, not knowing what to expect, I walked toward him. His back was to me, his white T-shirt plastered to it with sweat his elbows tight against his sides, as he looked down at his hands. Just behind him was the grinder lying on its side on the concrete floor, with the sanding pad torn to shreds. Then I saw a trail of blood leading to Jeff. "Jeff, what the hell—" I said but broke off when I saw the damage. Blood was trickling steadily out of Jeffs right arm, and the bones and tendons in his wrist were exposed. The hard rubber backing of the sander had left

a black streak across his flesh. Grabbing him by the other arm, I said, "We need to get you to a hospital." ~~We left all the shop stuff lying where we had dropped it, and got out to my truck in a hurry. I didn't even lock up. And I was luck that no one decided to stop off for some expensive power tools because there are thousands of dollars worth lying around for the taking~~ I made it to Saint Luke's in minutes, and they took care of him their. ~~the doctor's and nurses' took took care of him their~~. Jeff was lucky. ~~he always seemed to be~~. He was only out of work for three weeks, and their was no lasting damage. But that night we both learned that in this job their is no safe way to rush.

—*Kyle Burnett*

Editing

After you have revised your paper several times for material, organization, and style, it's time to focus on mechanics: grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The object of editing is to make your writing more readable, which you will do by controlling *most* of your errors. However, do keep in mind that few people write 100 percent error-free prose—and that you will learn this semester what you need to know to edit effectively.

The following are some pointers to help with effective editing:

1. **Review slowly.** Go *slowly*, stopping often. When you edit, you will tend to see whole word groups as you are used to seeing them, rather than how they actually appear on the page. Your mind will fill in the blanks for missing words, register a *there* as *their*, or create or eliminate pauses for commas unpredictably.

   To help you concentrate, try putting your finger on each word of your printed draft. Move line by line, stopping frequently at the end of completed thoughts. If you are not sure about a possible mistake, write a question mark and continue. But don't just ignore it, hoping the question will go away. It won't.

2. **Review repeatedly.** Read through your paper many times, each time focusing on just a few kinds of errors.

3. **Track your error types.** Begin an Improvement Chart (see the back of the book) after your instructor hands back your first in-class writing sample (often called a **diagnostic writing sample**). List your most common errors on the chart so that you can track and then correct them. Does it make more sense to memorize all the rules in a 500-page handbook or to figure out the handful of mistakes that causes *you* the most problems?



Begin editing from the last sentence and move backward.



Concentrate on your most serious errors first.



To keep your eyes from jumping ahead, try covering the line that follows the one you are editing.

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HINT

Learn your pattern errors.

English Review Note

After submitting your first paper, ask your instructor which specific errors you should focus on (articles, subject-verb agreement, etc.).

4. **Consult instructional materials.** Use Units Two and Three in this text and a supplemental handbook if your instructor requires one. As you write papers, your instructor will mark errors, including **pattern errors,** or recurring mistakes of the same type. This text gives examples of common pattern errors and shows how to correct them.
5. **Take advantage of others' input.** Allow enough time for others to review your work with you: classmates, friends, family members, writing center tutors, and your composition instructor.
6. **Use a computer.** Type your draft. Errors are generally more noticeable on a cleanly word-processed page than on a handwritten one, and you have the advantage of using spell and grammar checks.

Proofreading

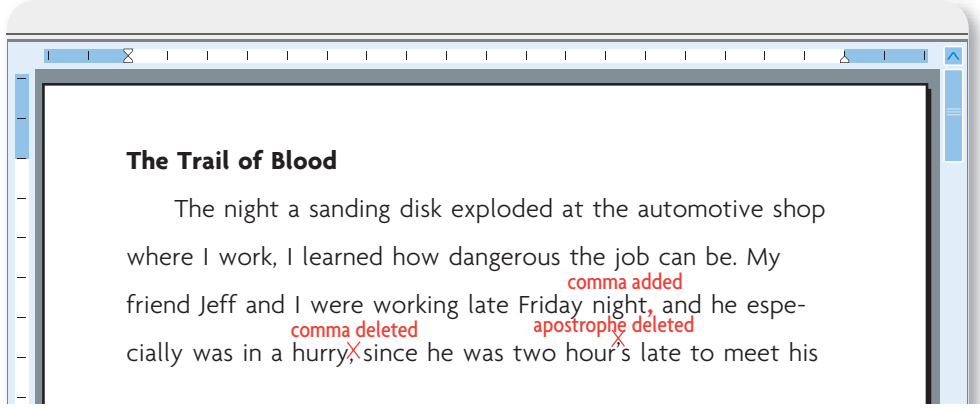
Proofreading is the last step in the writing process. After you have closely edited your last draft and caught all the mechanical errors possible, print out the copy you plan to turn in for a grade. As careful as you have been, chances are this draft still has a few mistakes that you can catch and correct—before your instructor does. Here are some tips for proofreading and preparing your final manuscript:

1. Check for typographical errors such as misspelled, run-together, and omitted words. Often when fixing errors in the editing stage, writers slip up in small ways on the keyboard. *Be sure to spell-check once again.*
2. Check the following items carefully: font size (12 point), line spacing (double space), margins (1 inch), and title. Remember to capitalize all words in titles and headings, even small ones like *is* and *do*, except articles (*a, an, the*), prepositions (*of, in, to,* etc.), and coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, so,* etc.). If articles, prepositions, or conjunctions begin or end a title or follow a colon, however, capitalize even them.
3. Spell-check any additional required material, such as outlines. Staple or paper-clip your pages. Avoid putting your paper in a plastic sleeve, which most instructors consider a nuisance.

ACTIVITY 1.13 *Proofreading*

Proofread your paper, and hand it to your instructor. Be sure to read your teacher's comments and corrections carefully when he or she returns the paper, and then list all errors on your Improvement Chart. Note how Kyle Burnett polished "The Trail of Blood" with editing and proofreading.

KYLE'S EDITED DRAFT: A MODEL



girlfriend. I was welding an axle, and he was sanding a '75 Corvette. The electric lights hanging from cords spotlighted us and cast deep shadows around the rest of the shop. I was sweating in my heavy welding gloves and hood but being careful; 1000 degrees is a lot of heat to make a mistake with. Jeff, though, was racing along. He called over to me, "Kyle, you're a slug. You'll be here till midnight if you don't get on it." I nodded, through he couldn't see me, and kept the arc on the bead. "You just keep it up, hotdog," I said to him. See if you don't burn through that fender." That's when, over the sizzle of the Miller welder and the roar of the grinder, I heard the sanding disk catch on the metal and explode. I thought to myself, "Serves him right. As soon as I'm done with this, I'll razz him." The shop was almost quiet with the sander off, accept except for the hum of my welder. Then I heard Jeff, in a weak, tight voice, call my name. The tone said trouble. Raising my hood, not knowing what to expect, I walked toward him. His back was to me, his white T-shirt plastered to it with sweat, his elbows tight against his sides as he looked down at his hands. Just behind him was the grinder lying on its side on the concrete floor, with the sanding pad torn to shreds. Then I saw a trail of blood leading to Jeff. "Jeff, what the hell—" I said but broke off when I saw the damage. Blood was steadily trickling out of Jeff's right arm, and the bones and tendons in his wrist were exposed. The hard rubber backing of the sander had left a black streak across his flesh. Grabbing him by the arm, I said, "We need to get you to a hospital." I made it to Saint Luke's in minutes, and they took care of him their there. Jeff was lucky. He was only out of work for three weeks, and there was no lasting damage. But that night we both learned that in this job, their there is no safe way to rush.

—*Kyle Burnett*

comma added
semicolon fixes comma splice
spelling error corrected
comma splice corrected
comma fixes fragment
spelling error corrected
comma added
comma deleted
apostrophe added
spelling error corrected
spelling error corrected

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Diagnostic Writing Assignments

Before you begin any of the assignments below, review this chapter's advice on discovering ideas, organizing, and drafting. Try at least one prewriting method, and aim to write a single paragraph of around 200 to 250 words. After you have a revised draft in hand, be sure to edit and proofread it carefully. Because your instructor may ask for them, save your prewriting and organizing notes so that you can turn them in along with your draft. For each assignment, your *audience* is your instructor, and your *purpose* is to practice the process and demonstrate writing skills.

Option 1: Description

Describe a room that you are familiar with and comfortable in. If you can visit the room (for instance, a room in your home), you might try **listing** details of the surroundings and then arranging the details spatially (one side to the other, front to back, bottom to top—see Chapter 21). Remember to state some point or main idea about the room in your first sentence.

Option 2: Narration

Tell a story about some event in your life that you remember well and that has affected your view of yourself, another person, or the larger world. You could use several of the discovery methods in this chapter to find ideas, but you might begin with **general clustering** and then try a **focused cluster.** Arrange your details chronologically (as if you were reliving the event from beginning to end—see Chapters 22 and 25). State some point or reason for telling the story in your first sentence.

Option 3: Exposition

Explain why you are in college. What do you hope to gain from this experience? You could use several of the discovery methods in this chapter to find ideas, but you might begin with **general freewriting** and then try a **focused freewrite.** Arrange your reasons, starting your paragraph with the least important one and ending with the most important (see Chapter 23). State some overall point or reason for being in school in your first sentence.



ACTIVITY 1.14 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Writing Process Review***

Take the Chapter 1 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan to evaluate your own understanding of the writing process. For additional help with all stages of composing a college paper (from brainstorming to proofreading), visit the Paradigm Online Writing Assistant: http:/www.powa.org/.

Chapter Summary

1. Clarify the writing project.
2. Commit yourself to the work.

3. Practice the writing process:
   a. Discover
   b. Organize
   c. Draft
   d. Revise
   e. Edit
   f. Proofread
4. Be flexible in approaching the writing task. Try alternatives when necessary.
5. Don't despair. There is plenty of help available for your writing, but you must become an active learner, seeking out the help you need to succeed.

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The Reading Process 2

[*Describe a pleasurable or frustrating reading experience you had in high school or college. Be specific: what about the reading assignment was interesting and/or challenging?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Reading more effectively
- Prereading: Preparing to understand
- Reading
  - Processing ideas
  - Focusing and recording main ideas
- Postreading: Retaining ideas

Is There a More Effective Way to Read?

We can all read and have been able to for years, so why bother with a chapter like this? Although most of us are competent readers, not many of us regularly read and interact with complex, information-heavy texts, such as college textbooks. This type of reading may include learning concepts, showing how they interrelate, memorizing facts and other detailed examples, and evaluating ideas and issues. While critical reading is challenging, learning the few simple methods listed below can make it easier. The rest of this chapter expands on these three points to help you become a more effective reader.

METHODS FOR READING

1. Prereading: preparing to understand
2. Reading: processing ideas
3. Postreading: refining and retaining ideas

Prereading: Preparing to Understand

Reading, like writing, is best understood as a process. Just as you spend time planning before writing a first draft, so too should you spend some time sizing up a text before you begin to read it. Here are three useful approaches:

1. **Skim** all *signposts:* titles; chapter previews and summaries; headings; subheadings; analytical questions; text boxes; and highlighted, boldfaced, and italicized print.
2. **Skim** *beginnings* and *endings.*
3. **Link** *new* information to *previous* knowledge.

Signposts

All textbooks use visual aids to help students focus on the main points in each chapter. The title itself usually contains the main idea of the chapter. After the title you often find chapter previews, sometimes as bulleted lists or brief summaries. Within the chapter, the major headings and subheadings form a chapter outline. Brief summaries or numbered lists of essential points often appear at the ends of main sections, and many chapters conclude with a summary or questions on the chapter's primary ideas. Text boxes and marginal notes highlight significant points and ask questions to help readers reflect on the material. Finally, words and passages are **boldfaced,** *italicized,* or shaded to emphasize a point. Skimming through a chapter and noting these reading aids may take a few minutes, but it is time well spent.



Signposts create a chapter outline.

Beginnings and Endings

Chapters in textbooks are organized much like paragraphs and essays. Each chapter has a central focus (this chapter's is *reading effectively*), which divides into several key topics (such as *prereading, reading,* and *postreading*). These are in turn divided into subtopics, all of which are then developed through examples, details, and explanations. Before reading the body of a chapter, look over the chapter introduction and concluding paragraphs or chapter summary. Then skim the body paragraphs, focusing on the *first* and *last* sentences of each one. All paragraphs should contain a unifying idea, and that idea is often stated as a topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph; it may be restated as a summary sentence at the end.

Connections: Linking New to Previous Knowledge

After previewing a chapter, pause for a moment to reflect. What have you just read? What does it mean to you at this point? How do the terms and ideas fit into your previous experience? We each have a large store of experience and knowledge to draw from. When we link new knowledge to what we already know, we understand and remember it better. For example, the concept of global climate change might

seem difficult to understand at first, but if we compare the buildup of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere to adding extra insulation inside the walls of a house, we can see how the earth, like that house, would hold in more heat.

Within almost all new material, we can identify something familiar. If we have little actual experience with a topic, we can still make associations and useful comparisons that will help us engage with it. In each chapter in Part Four of this text, the **Linking to Previous Experience** feature emphasizes ways that concepts might be familiar to you already. Similarly, the **Linking to Future Experience** feature explores how skills and processes discussed could be useful to you in future classrooms and the world beyond.

ACTIVITY 2.1 *Prereading: Previewing a Chapter*

Turn to Chapter 1 and scan its signposts, beginning, and end. For now, don't read the body of the text; just sample the chapter's key topics. After 5 minutes of skimming, answer the questions below on a separate sheet of paper. Feel free to turn back to the chapter.

1. What is this chapter's central focus? _____
2. What four questions should a writer ask at the start of a writing project?

   _____
3. What are seven ways to discover ideas for writing?

   _____

   _____
4. What can you compare a rough outline to? _____
5. How might considering your surroundings help a draft flow more smoothly? _____
6. What does *writer's block* mean? _____
7. What are four revision priorities? _____

Reading: Processing Ideas



Active reading is a deliberate, often slow process. Active readers interact with the text.

After previewing a chapter, you will move to the next step of active reading, in which you read the body of the text, adding to your initial understanding of the material. During the reading, you may often pause to think about the author's message, sometimes backing up to reread. Complicated material requires careful reading; seldom can you race through a college textbook.

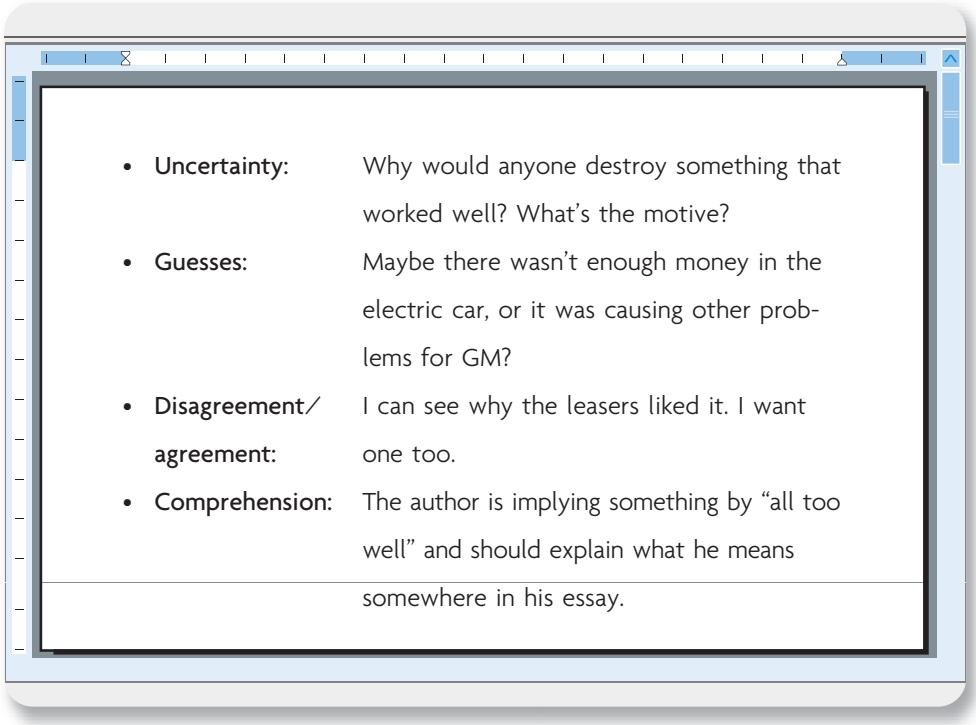
As active readers move through a text, they interact with it, asking questions, anticipating the author's next point, agreeing or disagreeing with the ideas, and linking the new information to their established knowledge. Here are three useful habits to develop as you read through any text:

1. **Anticipate** and **react** to the author's points.
2. **Visualize** what the author is explaining or detailing.
3. **Link** new ideas to previous ones.

Anticipating and Reacting

When you preview a chapter, you guess at what the body of the text will present more fully. Then as you read, you react to the more-detailed information. For example, an author could make an arguable statement like "The electric car,

the EV1, was working fine in the 1990s until it was destroyed by GM and others who saw that it was working all too well." You could tentatively agree or disagree with that statement, depending on the examples and explanations that follow. Let's assume the writer offered these points as support for the claim "working fine": the EV1 was dependable, economical, handled well, accelerated quickly, had a cruising range of 140 miles, was "refueled" by plugging it into a wall outlet overnight, emitted no air pollutants, and was loved by 1,000 people who leased it. Having read these points, a reader might respond like this:



- **Uncertainty:** Why would anyone destroy something that worked well? What's the motive?
- **Guesses:** Maybe there wasn't enough money in the electric car, or it was causing other problems for GM?
- **Disagreement/ agreement:** I can see why the leasers liked it. I want one too.
- **Comprehension:** The author is implying something by "all too well" and should explain what he means somewhere in his essay.

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Experienced readers carry on a running *internal* conversation between themselves and the text, but they also sometimes express themselves *aloud.*

Remember that all writing—from comic book to calculus textbook—comes from people who are trying to communicate. Not all writers succeed at this. When writers don't communicate clearly, readers must puzzle out meaning for themselves. Interacting with a text is the most important habit you can develop to become a more effective reader.

Visualizing

Another active-reading technique is to visualize what the author is saying. To one degree or another, we all form images in our minds. For example, what kinds of pictures do you see in the following description of a child at a swimming pool in July?

> Ten-year-old Amy stood swaying at the end of the high dive, 12 feet from the water, thinking, "This time I'm gonna do it." The blue water sparkled with points of sunlight and looked very far away. She could see the drying trail of her wet footsteps leading to the ladder, with three impatient kids in line calling at her, "Hurry up, get going, jump!" Amy stepped back a few feet and felt the sandpaper surface of the board under her bare feet. She flexed the board, felt it dip down. She took one last look at the sides of the pool,

> crowded with people on white plastic loungers, their towels a swirl of colors: bright red, yellow, purple, and blue, patio umbrellas shading the sunburned. "All right, I'm going already." Amy pinched her nosed shut, squealed, and then stepped into air.

Although this brief paragraph includes only a few of the details we would see if we were actually there, we can work with the writer to fill in others, helping the scene come alive. Our active imaginations, aided by associations, might add any or all of the following to this scene: a fence around the pool, other diving boards, lifeguards on their chairs, children splashing, swimmers doing laps, people eating popsicles. Writers select details to stimulate a reader's imagination. Active readers then do most of the work themselves.

Even writers who are not purposefully writing description use many detailed examples to illustrate their points. (See Chapter 21 for more on descriptive writing.) Active readers form pictures in their minds as key words trigger images. For example, you might read a passage like the following:

> One of the most beautiful places in the world is also the most deadly—the Bermuda Triangle. What could cause the planes and ships to disappear: whirlpools, sea tornadoes, tsunamis, blue holes, storms, or even UFOs?

The term *blue holes* may be unfamiliar to most readers, but others, like *whirlpools* and *UFOs,* probably inspire images in your mind: a swirling funnel of water sucking a ship underwater or a vast alien spaceship, complete with energy beams to draw in ships and planes. We all form images differently, but creating vivid pictures helps us remember material—and it makes reading much more interesting.

Linking New to Previous Knowledge

As in prereading, you should try to connect new ideas to previous knowledge as you read. For example, linking the Bermuda Triangle to Miami, Florida, will help you remember its location. If you also know where Puerto Rico and Bermuda are located, you can then imagine a huge triangle stretching from these three points. Whenever you link previous knowledge to new ideas through associations and comparisons, you help yourself understand and remember.

ACTIVITY 2.2 Developing Active Reading Habits

Return to Chapter 1, this time for an in-depth reading. Focus on the topic of "Drafting" (pp. 13–15). Read that section carefully, and then practice the three active reading habits discussed above: *anticipate and react* to the text, *visualize* (create a mental picture), and *link new ideas to previous knowledge*. Write your responses on a separate sheet of paper.

EXAMPLE: Applying active reading habits to "What to Ask at the Start of a Writing Project" (p. 3)

A. **Anticipate and react:** Well, it makes sense to me to ask some of these questions. I try to figure out all the details for other jobs I have. But I'm not so sure about this audience thing. Isn't the teacher always the main reader?

B. **Visualize:** When I think of the main purposes of writing, I see these images: entertaining—comedians up on a stage like on *Comics Unleashed;* informing—a meeting of business people around a big oval conference table with me standing in front of a flip chart with a pointer; persuading—a politician like Hillary Clinton or George W. Bush at a podium, trying to sell their vision of America to a crowd of people.

C. **Link to previous knowledge:** I can see what the author means about "attitude" toward work. I can practice guitar till my fingers are about bleeding, and still I look forward to playing the next day. Friends think I'm crazy for sitting on a chair and playing for three hours, but for me it's fun. I have the right attitude for becoming better at guitar.

ACTIVITY 2.3 WORKING TOGETHER: *Developing Active Reading Habits through Discussion*



Share your in-depth readings of "Drafting" from Activity 2.2 with a partner or several group members. Discuss how your responses are similar and unique, focusing in particular on visualizing and linking to Previous Knowledge. Share images that came to mind as you read or specific stories from your own experiences that connect to the reading. How does talking about various reading experiences change your specific response to a passage?

Reading: Focusing and Recording Main Ideas

Knowing a few common patterns for organizing and developing ideas will make your reading easier and more efficient the first time through. Also, using a *pencil* and a *highlighter* will make the material easier to review. Here are several strategies to help focus your reading and methods for recording the information you have located:

1. **Look** for *thesis, topic,* and *summary sentences.*
2. **Focus** on *main examples.*
3. **Look** for *repeated material.*
4. **Notice** the *patterns of development.*
5. **Learn** to *annotate, outline, summarize,* and *paraphrase.*



Some languages use circular organizations, but English does not.

Looking for Thesis, Topic, and Summary Sentences

Thesis sentences contain the main idea of an essay; topic sentences contain the main idea of a paragraph. Both sentences state, "This is my topic, and this is what I'm going to say about it." Essays and textbook chapters usually have a thesis statement in the opening paragraphs. Within body paragraphs the first or second sentence is often a topic sentence, and at the end of the paragraph may be a summary sentence that reiterates the main idea or connects it to ideas in the next paragraph. Look for these sentences when you preview a text, and then concentrate on them while reading. In the following paragraph from Chapter 1, the topic and summary sentences are shaded. The meaning of the boldfacing and the boxing is explained in the following sections. (For more on thesis, topic, and summary sentences, see Chapters 19 and 30.)

Preparing a Workspace

Before drafting, why not set up a workspace that will help you write? Some people are comfortable working around **noise** and activity, but many aren't. If you need **quiet,** find a quiet spot (a library?). Give yourself enough **time** to get something

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done. If 30 minutes is enough, great, but keep yourself **on task** the whole time. Decide **what else** might help you **to be productive:** food, soda, coffee, music? Do you work best curled up in bed with a pencil, paper, and clipboard; or do you like to be in front of your computer? Make your work easier by creating a space that encourages you to write.

Focusing on Main Examples

Paragraphs are built from detailed examples and explanations. However, not all of these are critical to a reader's understanding of the paragraph's main idea. Writers often use secondary examples and explanations simply to reinforce their most important points. When reading for information, you should concentrate on the primary examples and most important explanations. Try not to be distracted by the less-important ones. In the paragraph above, the main points that support the topic sentence are in **bold type.** The other supporting examples—*library, 30 minutes, food,* etc.—are secondary and useful primarily to develop the main idea.



Learn transition words such as: *in other words*, *for example*, *for instance*, *that is*.

Looking for Repeated Material

Textbooks in particular repeat and elaborate important ideas, providing many examples and explanations. When you notice repeated material within a paragraph or chapter section (often highlighted in lists, charts, summaries, headings, and text boxes), pay special attention; it is probably important. In the example paragraph above, notice that the idea of a workspace that encourages writing, in the boxed phrases, is repeated several times.

Noticing the Patterns of Development

In Chapter 1 we looked briefly at the patterns of development (PODs) that writers use to expand and clarify their ideas. Body paragraphs are usually developed with detailed examples, and writers use those examples in predictable ways. For example, the paragraph above on preparing a workspace focuses on process instructions, telling how to create a productive writing environment. It could be further developed with a brief story or comparison or any of the other PODs. When we begin to recognize these patterns, the ideas and information contained within them become easier to understand and recall.



Learn cause-and-effect, comparison-contrast, and other words that indicate patterns of organization.

Learning to Annotate, Outline, Summarize, and Paraphrase

Annotations



Try different methods for recording your interaction with a text to find one that works for you.

After discovering the main points in a text, active readers often **annotate**—that is, they underline or highlight important points and then write marginal notes to record their reactions to the material. It is common for readers to write questions, agree/disagree with a point, express surprise, link an idea with one found elsewhere in the text, and so on. You might number examples, star passages, circle prominent facts, and connect information with arrows.

There is no one way to annotate, but in general, highlight selectively. Highlighting three-fourths of the text will not help you focus on its critical parts. Less is better.

Preparing a Workspace

Here's the main point.

Before drafting, why not set up a workspace that will help you write? Some people are comfortable working around noise and activity, but many aren't. If you need quiet, Go with noisy or quiet, whatever works. find a quiet spot (a library?). Give yourself enough time to get something done. If 30 minutes is enough, great, but How can anyone stay focused all the time? keep yourself on task the whole time. Decide what else might help you to be productive: food, soda, coffee, music? Do you work best curled up in bed with a pencil, paper, and clipboard; I like to work during the commercials. or do you like to be in front of your computer? Make your work easier by creating a space that encourages you to write.

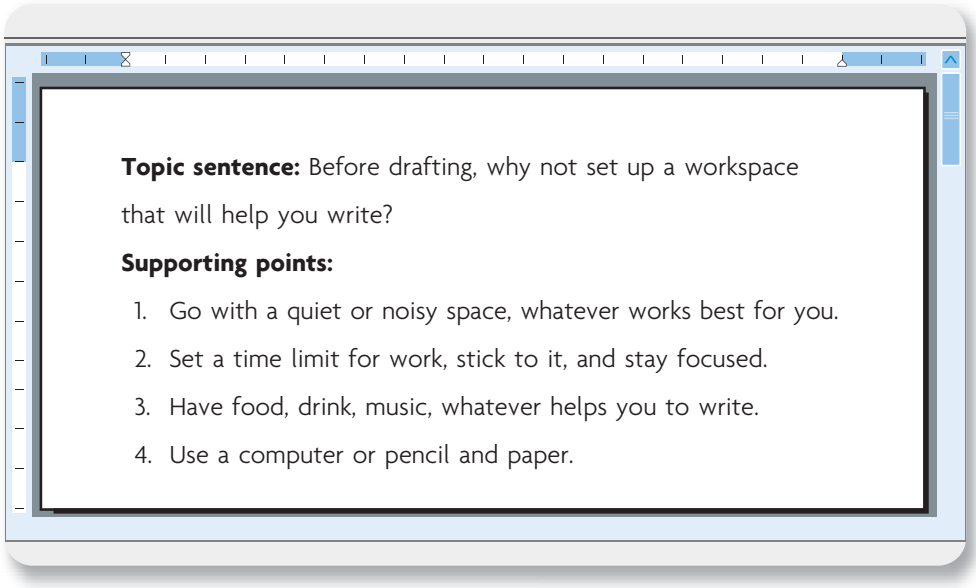
SAMPLE ANNOTATION



Focus on main ideas and supporting details; resist focusing on unfamiliar words.

Outlines

Informal "scratch" outlines can also be useful for retaining information. Here is how we might outline the preceding paragraph:



Topic sentence: Before drafting, why not set up a workspace that will help you write?

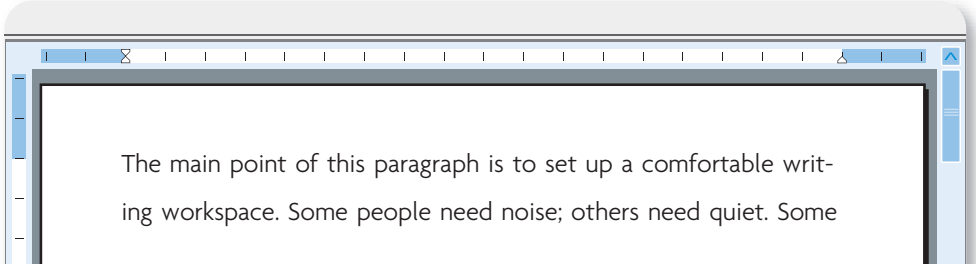
Supporting points:

1. Go with a quiet or noisy space, whatever works best for you.
2. Set a time limit for work, stick to it, and stay focused.
3. Have food, drink, music, whatever helps you to write.
4. Use a computer or pencil and paper.

SAMPLE SCRATCH OUTLINE

Paraphrase and Summary

Paraphrasing and summarizing material that you read helps you remember it because these activities require you to put the text's ideas into your own words. In a paraphrase, you keep both primary and secondary examples. Therefore, a paraphrase is longer than a summary, which consists only of the main idea and significant examples. Here is how the workspace paragraph might be paraphrased or summarized:



The main point of this paragraph is to set up a comfortable writing workspace. Some people need noise; others need quiet. Some

SAMPLE PARAPHRASE

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work best with a computer; others, with paper and pencil. It's good to write for a set time and stay focused. Writers should give themselves whatever treats they neeed to be comfortable.

SAMPLE SUMMARY

This paragraph advises people to create a workspace that helps them write and then to work for a set time and stay focused till they are finished.



ACTIVITY 2.4 WORKING ONLINE: *Summarizing a News Article*

Read the article "Six Tips for a Healthy Spring Break" at http://www.newsweek.com/id/114551. First, summarize this page-long article in a paragraph. Then summarize it in a sentence.

ACTIVITY 2.5 *Focusing and Recording Main Ideas*

Read through the paragraph below, underlining the topic sentence and any main examples. (Remember that topic sentences are usually the first or second sentence but can be located elsewhere in a paragraph.) Next, annotate in the margins to show your reactions. Finally, write a brief scratch outline and a one-sentence summary of the paragraph.

Moving Ahead

Good writing is not usually easy and challenges all writers to overcome problems in their way. If it is a time problem, time must be found. If you are a fast writer whose work seems unfocused, you may need to slow down. Alternately, you may write so slowly that you can't meet deadlines and so need to speed up. If you usually write on paper but aren't making much progress, you might try drafting on a computer. Sometimes we have difficulties resuming work on a draft we have left for a while. Starting again can be easier if we jot a few notes to remind us of where we want the draft to go,

and sometimes simply stopping in mid-sentence can be a solution. Despite the problems that all writers must deal with, we should resist the impulse to be overly critical of our *rough* drafts. They are just that—works in progress. We will be more critical as we begin to revise.

Scratch Outline

Topic sentence (main point): _____

_____

Supporting points: _____

_____

_____

Summary (one sentence)

_____

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Postreading: Retaining Ideas

If you want to get the most from your reading, it is important to review the material after you have finished. Take a few minutes to keep interacting with the text by asking questions like these: What do I think of this reading? How does it fit with my experience? Are there points that I agree or disagree with, an idea or suggestion that I will use from now on or that I think is useless? Forming opinions will help you remember important ideas.

There are many ways to review effectively, and you have probably tried some of them: silently skimming main points, stating them aloud, or organizing your thoughts on paper. Here are some suggestions that will help you review any reading assignment:

1. **Repeat the prereading step**, focusing especially on signposts (chapter previews and summaries, headings, etc.).
2. **Summarize or outline the main points**. This may only require pulling together the paragraph summaries you have already written or listing the main points you underlined when you annotated.
3. **Quiz yourself** on the material as if your instructor were asking the questions. If you can't answer your own questions, you know you have to reread.
4. **Try to define any important term or idea** in a sentence of fewer than 20 words. Can you remember (or come up with) an example that helps to define the term or support the idea?
5. **List** what you feel are the three most important points from your reading.

TAKE GREEN NOTES



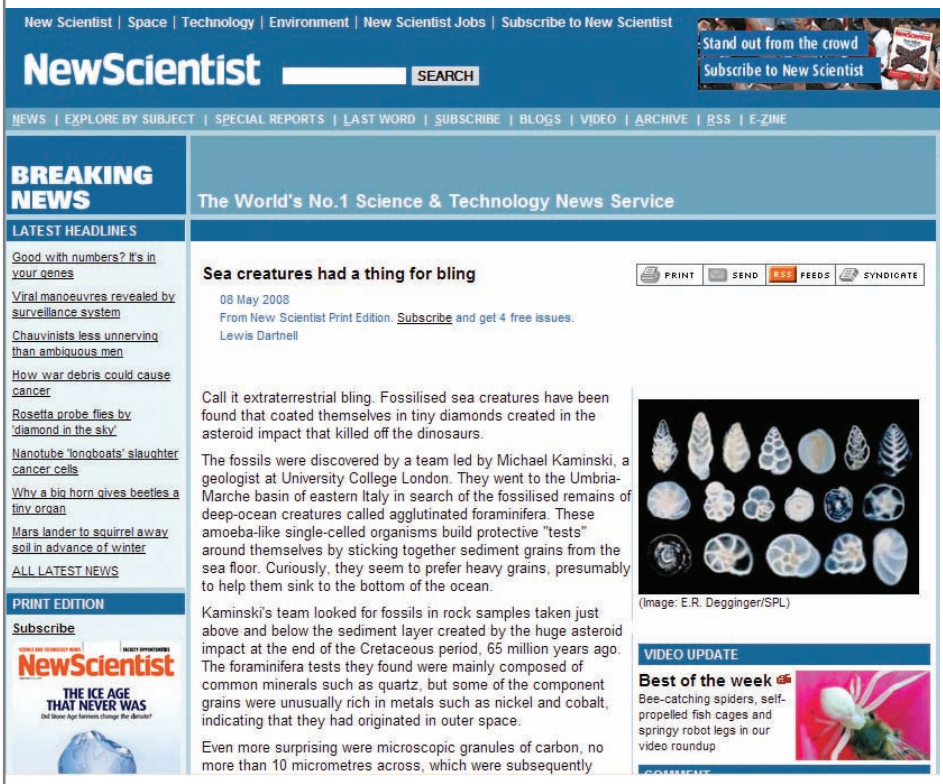
When taking notes on a reading, use both sides of each piece of notebook paper. Or consider taking notes on your laptop or a classroom computer. You will save money and have easy access to your notes anytime. Resist the urge to browse online and remember to turn off your IM. Be sure to always back up your files on a network or flash drive—or email the notes to yourself. If the machine fails, you don't lose your work. •



ACTIVITY 2.6 WORKING ONLINE: *Reading a Website*

Both in the classroom and outside it, we are reading more and more texts online rather than in print. How is reading a website different from reading a print text? Navigability is one issue: instead of turning pages, you click on links. Organization is not entirely linear; you can skip to other parts or sections of the site in an instant.

A. Look carefully at the web page pictured here. What reading techniques learned in this chapter could you apply to "read" it? What techniques might you need to reconsider in this environment?



B. Go to http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg19826553.500-sea-creatures-had-a-thing-for-bling.html, and read this article online. Summarize the article in a paragraph. Then, in several sentences, state one response you have to it; this might be a question, a specific criticism or some praise about what you've read, or a



ACTIVITY 2.7 WORKING ONLINE: *Reading Review*

Take the Chapter 2 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

ACTIVITY 2.8 *Practicing Postreading Strategies: Creating This Chapter's Summary*

Using any of the five suggestions for reviewing reading assignments (p. 33), review Chapter 2, and then list the essential points about reading that you need to remember. Limit your list to ten (or fewer) points.

Chapter Summary

1. _____
2. _____
   _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
   _____
   _____
6. _____
   _____
   _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

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Crafting Sentences: Understanding How They Work

2

3 Subjects, Verbs, and Other Sentence Parts 37
4 Verbs: Forms and Tenses 49
5 Subject-Verb Agreement 74
6 Nouns 92
7 Pronouns 101
8 Adjectives and Adverbs 118
9 Conjunctions and Prepositions 131
10 Phrases 141
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BRANNAN



Subjects, Verbs, and Other Sentence Parts

3

[*In a few sentences describe yourself or someone else actively participating in a sport. Try to use interesting, exciting action words.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Identifying the parts of speech
- Recognizing verbs and subjects in simple sentences

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Describing this chapter's opening picture, we could say, "The snowboarder flies downhill, enjoying every second." The athlete is the **subject** of our attention, but what he is doing as he "flies" downhill—the action, or **verb**—makes the picture especially interesting. This chapter provides a brief overview of the words we use when we speak and write (called the **parts of speech**) and then helps you find verbs and subjects in sentences. As you become more familiar with how words function in sentences, you will become more confident when you write—and speak. The points you are trying to make will become clearer, and errors that get in the way of what you want to say will gradually decrease.

Identifying the Parts of Speech

All words in sentences fall into the following eight traditional categories, known as the **parts of speech,** based on how they function.

THE PARTS OF SPEECH

1. Verbs
2. Nouns
3. Pronouns
4. Adjectives
5. Adverbs
6. Prepositions
7. Conjunctions
8. Interjections

We will cover each of these parts of speech briefly in the next few pages so that you can better understand how to distinguish verbs and subjects from surrounding words. Later chapters will explore particular parts of speech in greater detail.

Verbs

Verbs, along with nouns, are the core of sentences. The verb expresses action or state of being, and nouns (or pronouns) are doers of the action or the focus of the being verb. Verbs are of several types, italicized and underlined in the examples below:

1. **Action verbs** show something happening—physically, mentally, or emotionally.

   Sarah *plays* drums in a band.

2. **Being** (or **linking**) **verbs** tell about a state of being. The verb *be* in its various forms (*am, are, is, was, were, been, being*) is the most common of these.

   Alexander *is* a strong man.

3. **Helping verbs** help the main verb of a sentence express meaning. With the main verb, they create a unit called a **verb phrase** (see p. 42). Common helping verbs include *be, have, do, may, might, must, can, should,* and *would.*

   Fong *should be* fixing the lawnmower.

Nouns

Nouns, along with verbs, form the core of our sentences, telling who or what is doing the action or is the focus of the verb. Nouns name a person (*Juanita*), place (*plaza*), thing (*hammer*), concept (*evolution*), or quality (*loyalty*).

Pronouns

Pronouns are words that stand in the place of nouns. Like nouns, they can perform the action in a sentence (*He* lost the keys) or receive the action (He lost *them* [the keys]).

COMMONLY USED PRONOUNS

I you he she it they all everyone many someone
who this that my your his hers its their

Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe nouns or pronouns by answering questions like the following: *what size?* (*tall* vase), *what kind?* (*loud* child), *how many?* (*three* apples). Adjectives in English usually come directly before the word they describe.

Adverbs

Adverbs are words that describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs by answering questions like *when*? (he went *early*), *how?* (she spoke *softly*), and *how often?* (he *frequently* visits his parents).

Prepositions

Prepositions are words that come before nouns and pronouns in sentences to form prepositional phrases (*on* the table, *in* the box, *by* the stream). Prepositions often—but not always—show location.

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words that link sentence parts. The main types are coordinating (*and, but, or, so, yet, for, nor*) and subordinating (words like *because, if, when, although*).

Interjections

Interjections are words used to express emotion (*oh, no!, hey!, hurray!*).

We seldom use all of the parts of speech in any one sentence, but we often use many in our most common expressions, as in the following sentence:

CONJ N V PRO N N ADV V ADJ N
After Fay handed her the wrench, Ellen firmly tightened the last bolt

PREP N CONJ V INTERJ
on the garage door opener and exclaimed, "Hallelujah!"

In this chapter, we focus on the verbs and subjects (nouns and pronouns) in simple sentences.

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Recognizing Verbs and Subjects in Simple Sentences

The sentence is one of the most important word groups in writing. When we are sure about where our sentences begin and end, we stand a better chance of making our ideas understood, the whole point of writing. Most sentences require a **subject**, a **verb**, and a **complete thought**. The rest of this chapter will give you experience in recognizing subjects (the doers of action or focus of a verb) and verbs (the action or being words).

First, to help spot subjects and verbs, keep in mind that most sentences are ordered with the subject (S) coming in front of the verb (V), followed by the word receiving the action, the **object** (O), as in this example:

S V O
Sasha jumped the fence.

English Review Note

Not all languages follow this word order.

English Review Note

Some languages have no endings on verbs. (The time expression alone indicates when the action occurred.)

Identifying Verbs

When trying to decide whether a sentence is complete, writers often try to find the subject first, which can be confusing if there are several words that look like subjects. It can be more useful to look for the verb first. One test for a verb is to see if it has **tense**: present, past, or future. Using the words *today*, *yesterday*, and *tomorrow* can help, as in the examples below:

Today, Tae *works* on his deck.

Yesterday, Tae *worked* on his deck.

Tomorrow, Tae *will work* on his deck.

Because the word *work* changes form, it is a verb.

HINT

Verbals do not function as verbs in sentences.

To find verbs, you can also eliminate some words that may look like verbs but are not. Three of these are called **verbals**, which may begin with the word *to* (as in *to drive*) or end in an *-ing* (as in *rushing*). (See pp. 76–80 for more on verbals.) Here are three examples with the subjects and verbs underlined and the *verbals* italicized:

1. Clara learned *to drive* at the age of 14.
2. Jack paddled upstream against the *rushing* water.
3. Tywon enjoys *swimming*.

HINT

Trying different action verbs can help you think more specifically about what a sentence is doing. Having a choice (and choosing the best option) can make your writing stronger and livelier.

Action Verbs

Another test for verbs is whether the word shows **action**. This action can be physical, mental, or emotional, as in the following examples:

Physical action:	Carrie Underwood *sings* country music.
Mental action:	Underwood *thinks* deeply about her performances.
Emotional action:	Underwood *hopes* for continued success.



ACTIVITY 3.1 **WORKING TOGETHER: *Creating Action Verbs***

Fill in the blanks below with any action verb that makes sense to you. As a variation, you can do this exercise in pairs and come up with two possible words for each blank.

1. Many talented people _____ on the reality show *American Idol*.
2. Barbara often _____ about her vacation to Kauai.

3. Max _____ a new pair of running shoes.
4. Police officers _____ criminals.
5. Mountain goats on the Napali Coast _____ very steep slopes.
6. Above all else, politicians _____ people's votes.
7. The airboat _____ through the Florida Everglades.
8. Lauren _____ puppies and everything pink.

ACTIVITY 3.2 *Finding Action Verbs*

In the paragraph below underline all the action verbs.

Squirrels climb trees better than any other animal. Three feet away from the trunk, a female squirrel leaps from the ground onto a tree. Then she scurries upward in a flash. Moments later she peers down from a fork in the tree. She rests for a minute. Now she gathers her energy for more action. Up, up, up, she quickly climbs. This little beast runs up the tree. Her toes clutch the ridges of the bark. In an instant she reaches the top. The squirrel pauses. She clings to the topmost branch. It bends beneath her weight. She judges the distance between her tree and the one beside hers. Mind made up, this furry acrobat leaps through the air. She lands safely in the tangle of branches of the next tree. From her new perch, the squirrel looks down below. She sees me on the ground. I admire her grace and skill in the treetops. But she thinks nothing of me. She thinks her own thoughts. Squirrels rule the trees. Everyone knows that.

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Being (or Linking) Verbs

While action verbs are essential to understanding sentences, **being** or **linking** verbs are equally important. These verbs tell about a state of being, a quality, or important characteristic of the subject they are describing. The verb *to be* along with its other forms is the most common linking verb. The chart below lists each of these forms, as well as several other common linking verbs:

BEING OR LINKING VERBS	
Forms of *To Be*	**Other Linking Verbs**
am are is was	act appear become feel get grow look
were been being	remain seem smell sound taste



Try memorizing some or all of these linking verbs.

In a sense linking verbs act as an equal sign between the subject and the word(s) that follows the verb to describe the subject, as in the following examples:

The T. rex *was* a savage predator.	T. rex = savage predator
Roxanne *is* a genius.	Roxanne = genius
That tiger kitten *looks* sick.	Tiger kitten = sick

ACTIVITY 3.3 *Finding Linking Verbs*

Referring to the chart of linking verbs above, underline each linking verb in the following sentences.

1. Shane is a great quarterback.
2. Pad Thai smells delicious.
3. In the tree branches overhead, the toilet paper was a mess.
4. After facing many problems in his life, Zach remained a good person.
5. Coffee tastes bitter to many people.
6. The Miata and the Mini Cooper are both fun cars.
7. Nguyen grew tired of the argument.
8. Twenty dollars seems a good price.

ACTIVITY 3.4 *Choosing Linking Verbs*

Referring to the chart of linking verbs above, fill in the blanks below with any linking verb that makes sense to you.

1. Danny _____ hungry.
2. My friend _____ disappointed by the concert.
3. Winstead's hamburgers _____ best with an ice-cold cherry limeade.
4. However, after three Winstead's hamburgers, Antonio _____ sick.
5. Korea _____ a single country before the Korean War.
6. After the tornado the neighborhood _____ devastated.
7. All of the children _____ happy at the thought of Kwanzaa.
8. The leak in the Trans-Alaska pipeline _____ a major problem for BP Oil.

Helping Verbs

Another type of verb is the **helping verb**. These kinds of verbs, as the name states, help a main verb complete its meaning. So instead of a single action or linking verb, now we have two or more verbs working together in a unit (called a **verb phrase**). Following is a list of common helping verbs:

HELPING VERBS

be	could	has	may	must	will
can	do	have	might	should	would

Remember that these verbs can appear in various forms (such as, *to be: is, am, are*, and so forth).

Here are some sentences with the verb phrase underlined and the *helping verbs* italicized. Note that sentences 2 and 3 have forms of the helping verb *be* in them. Also, you can see that the verb phrase in sentence 3 has the word *not* in it. Sometimes verb phrases have extra words in them that are not verb parts (for example, *only, often, always, never,* and *already*).

1. Hannah *should have* arrived on time.
2. Santa's reindeer *might be* flying overhead on Christmas Eve.
3. I *am* not working hard today.
4. Kyle *can* jog a 6-minute mile.

Notice that in the example sentences above, the main verb is at the end of the verb phrase. When forms of *be* are followed by another verb, *be* is a helping verb. But *be* can stand by itself as a being (or linking) verb (as we saw in Activities 3.3 and 3.4) or take a helping verb.



Let your instructor know if you'd like more clarification about these terms: *verb forms, tenses.*

ACTIVITY 3.5 *Finding Helping Verbs*

In the following sentences, underline the main verb and circle the helping verbs. Refer to the chart of helping verbs above.

1. Cody could win the gold medal for downhill skiing.
2. The movie *Cars* may already be the best-selling animated U.S. film of the summer.
3. The children have been feeding a stray cat.
4. Humpback whales can travel thousands of miles in a year.
5. Emilio must not have been excited about his raise.
6. With a better early warning system, more people should survive tsunamis.
7. My dad is cooking dinner for the whole family tonight.
8. Hayao Miyazaki has produced some of the best animated films in *any* country.

ACTIVITY 3.6 *Choosing Helping Verbs*

Referring to the preceding chart of helping verbs, fill in the following blanks with any helping verb(s) that makes sense to you.

1. Royals Stadium _____ reopen early in the summer.
2. Even in the winter Sergei _____ swim in the lake.
3. Makayla _____ singing professionally for 3 years.
4. All adult citizens _____ vote in the next election.
5. The carpenters _____ finished the first stage of the deck.
6. The wildfires in Oregon _____ burned 100,000 acres this summer.
7. Sophia _____ grounded by her parents for her last big mistake.
8. The Denver Broncos _____ win the Super Bowl again this season.

Compound Verbs

Another way to build sentences is with several verbs separated by other words. When a sentence has two or more verbs for the same subject—connected by *and* or *but*—we say they are **compound verbs**. These compounds can be with action, linking, or helping verbs (also see pp. 84–85).

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COMPOUND ACTION VERBS:

The baby *laughed* and *reached* for the rattle.

The clerk at Hy-Vee *smiled* at me, *totaled* my groceries, and *wished* me a good day.

COMPOUND LINKING VERBS:

Samantha *looked* tired and *felt* sick.

COMPOUND VERB PHRASES:

My dad *will cook* dinner for the family tonight and *will clean* the dishes too.

In this sentence, note that the helping verb *will* could be left out before *clean*; the second part of a compound verb phrase sometimes omits the helping verb.



Remember that the compound verbs must be in the same form.

ACTIVITY 3.7 *Finding Compound Verbs*

Underline the compound verbs and verb phrases in the sentences below.

1. Jason swung at the pitch yet missed the ball.
2. Hippos float in rivers during the day and move to land at night for food.
3. The students gathered in the hall, talked about the exam, and prayed for luck.
4. The price of oil may rise even higher and make even more money for oil companies.
5. Bad weather is rocking the jet but not endangering it.
6. Road construction will be blocking traffic today and closing the street tomorrow.
7. Madison will be playing soccer this morning or, if it rains, doing math homework.
8. Dimitri appeared happy but also seemed out of breath.

Recognizing Subjects

After locating the verb in a sentence, we next look for the subject. Subjects can be a single word or several words as a unit, called the **simple subject** (Ann runs for the bus. The air conditioner is blowing cool air.) Subjects can also include just their immediate describing words or additional word groups attached to the simple subject, in which case we have a **complete subject** (A senator from New York ran for president in 2008). The subject either does the action or is linked by a verb to a describing word, as in the following sentences:

SIMPLE SUBJECTS

1. **Subject with action verb:** Mariano Rivera pitches for the Yankees.
2. **Subject with helping and linking verbs:** Rivera may be the best closing pitcher in baseball.

In sentence 1 we ask, "Who pitches?" (the action verb), and we answer, "Mariano Rivera." We have found the subject. In sentence 2 we ask, "Who may be the best closing pitcher?" and we answer, "Rivera." Again we have found the subject. In most cases we can find the subject in a sentence by asking who or what is doing the action or being linked to a describing word.

Subjects can be nouns (people, places, things, concepts, qualities: *Roberto, Los Angeles, chair, gravity, beauty*) or pronouns (words standing in place of nouns: *I, he, they, it*).

Two other kinds of words that can be subjects are called **gerunds** (verb forms with an *-ing* on the end that act as nouns) and **infinitives** (verb forms that begin with *to* and can be nouns). Here are two examples:

Gerund subject: Laughing is good for the spirit.

Infinitive subject: To succeed requires hard work.



For more on gerunds and infinitives, see pp. 76–80.

ACTIVITY 3.8 *Finding Simple Subjects*

Find the simple subject in each sentence below by asking who or what is doing the action or being linked by a verb to a describing word. Next, underline the verb twice and the subject once. Remember that subjects can be pronouns and nouns (including gerunds and infinitives).

1. Walking can be good aerobic exercise.
2. People will land on Mars someday.
3. At the skating rink, I rented a pair of hockey skates.
4. The tundra is melting in places.
5. To overeat is foolish.
6. Grandmother died at the age of 100.
7. The temperature in North Dakota can drop to 40 below zero.
8. Governor Sibelius gave each of the firefighters a medal.



The agreement with gerund or infinitive subjects is always singular.

Complete Subjects

As we noted under "Recognizing Subjects," a complete subject contains the simple subject along with its describing words, for example: "Four great blue herons circled the kayaks." Because there are often many words in the complete subject, it can be difficult to locate the simple subject. This problem becomes more confusing because of word groups called **prepositional phrases** (see p. 142). These word groups begin with a preposition (*in, on, near*) and end with a noun or pronoun (*me, him, her, them*). Here are several examples of prepositional phrases:

in the store on the bus near him

Because in English the subject of a sentence is never found within a prepositional phrase, learning how to spot these phrases will make it easier for you to pick out subjects. Notice how crossing out the prepositional phrases from the complete subjects in the example sentences below makes the simple subjects clearer:

1. Loud noises ~~in a house at night~~ frighten most people.
2. The problem ~~of too much credit for my best friend, Alex~~, has grown out of control.

A brief list of common prepositions follows.

COMMON PREPOSITIONS				
about	at	down	of	to
above	behind	during	off	under
across	below	for from	on	with
along	beneath	in	onto	
around	beside	inside	out	
as	by	like near	through till	

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ACTIVITY 3.9 *Finding Simple Subjects within Complete Subjects*

In the following sentences underline the verbs or verb phrases twice and the complete subject once. Now cross out the prepositional phrases, and then circle the simple subjects.

1. Two of my aunts from my mother's side of the family are going to the reunion.
2. A large group of my relatives goes to Padre Island every fall.
3. One of these mistakes in a game plan by team members throws off the whole defense.
4. In a cave in southern Missouri, bats from the northern plains of Mexico hibernate.
5. The elm tree by the roses on the west side of Frank's house leans dangerously over the roof.
6. Under the bridge across Highway 62, an angler caught a 5-pound rainbow trout.
7. The fans in the parking lot of Arrowhead Stadium jump at the chance for players' autographs.
8. Across the street, a young mockingbird with a cicada in its beak settled onto a branch for a snack.

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See p. 81 for more on using compound subjects.

Compound Subjects

Similar to compound verbs, subjects can be linked when two or more are performing the same action or being described by the same verb. These **compound subjects** usually use the words *and* or *or*. Notice the example sentences below, with the simple subjects underlined once and the verbs and verb phrases twice:

Airplanes and cars carry the most passengers these days.

My silver Honda Civic, my red Toyota Tundra, and my new green Subaru Forester have been terrific vehicles.

Hurricanes or tornadoes will be featured on the Weather Channel tonight.

ACTIVITY 3.10 *Finding Compound Subjects*

In the following sentences underline the verbs twice and the compound subjects once.

1. Pens, pencils, and computers are the instruments for writing these days.
2. The Army, the Navy, and the Air Force all fly combat missions.
3. Gateway or Dell makes the best computers for the money.
4. During the concert at Red Rocks, Led Zepplin and Pink Floyd brought back old memories.
5. The Northwest and the Midwest are in a severe drought.
6. At the United Airlines ticket counter, a passenger and an agent discussed the weight restriction on luggage.
7. Apples, potatoes, onions, and beans have a fairly long shelf life.
8. In the United States, football, baseball, and basketball are the most popular sports.

ACTIVITY 3.11 *Subjects and Verbs in Context—A Review*

In the following paragraph, underline all simple subjects once and all verbs and verb phrases twice. Be alert to compound subjects and verbs, and remember that the verbals (examples: *to drive, rushing* water, and *swimming* is fun) are not verbs. The first two sentences are done as an example.

Twenty-four but Nevermore

On a warm June night, two of my girlfriends and I made a bad decision to sneak out of my house. Just after midnight my parents finally went to bed. Then Becca, Alli, and I dressed to go meet some boys. My bedroom was on the third floor of my house. And the only way out was through my closet door and onto the roof. We climbed out and made it down the roof safely without getting caught. After several hours with our boyfriends, we returned home. Now life became difficult. In order to get back into my house, my friends and I had to climb onto the roof. I went first. I grabbed the top of the fence and then boosted myself part way up. Suddenly, my foot slipped sideways and jammed between two fence slats. I lost my balance, fell over the fence, and hit my head on the ground. Blood began to pour down the side of my face. My friends and I both started to panic. Now I had no choice. I needed my parents. So Becca and Alli rang the doorbell. My mother came out to find three frightened girls and me with blood dripping down my face. My dad came out of the bedroom, took one look at me, and then went back into the bedroom to faint. Mother ran and grabbed a towel and then loaded us into the car. To the emergency room we went. There I received twenty-four stitches. On the way home mom and dad only yelled at me a little. But later they blocked off my exit to the roof. They didn't need to, though. I had learned my lesson. I never again thought about sneaking out.

—*Leah Eskie*

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ACTIVITY 3.12 WORKING ONLINE: *Identifying Subjects and Verbs in Context*



Read "The Century's Environmental Leaders" at http://www.newsweek.com/id/130264. On a separate sheet of paper, list all pairs of subjects and verbs, underlining the former once and the latter twice.

Example: Vanda Shiva was / She directs, advocates ●





ACTIVITY 3.13 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Using Subjects and Verbs in Examples***

In almost any writing assignment, you will use subjects and verbs to form examples of your main point. For instance, to illustrate a roommate's odd habits, you would describe both the person (subject) and his or her actions (verbs). With a partner, choose a writing topic from Chapter 23's list on page 345, and together draft a paragraph using examples. Use at least one of each of the following: a compound verb, a simple subject, a complete subject, a compound subject. Go back and underline all the subjects, double-underlining all the main verbs. (Remember that a verbal cannot serve as a main verb.)



ACTIVITY 3.14 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Subjects and Verbs Review***

Take the Chapter 3 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. All words in sentences can be categorized into eight parts of speech: verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.
2. A sentence requires a verb and a noun that work together to convey a complete thought.
3. When trying to decide whether a sentence is complete, look for the verb first. Both action and being (or linking) verbs can work as complete verbs in a sentence.
4. Verbals (gerunds, participles, and infinitives) cannot function as complete verbs in a sentence. Helping verbs can work with—but not without—a main verb.
5. Two or more verbs sharing the same subject are called compound verbs; they are separated by *and, but,* or another conjunction.
6. A simple subject can be one noun or several functioning together as a unit. Gerunds and infinitives can function as subjects.
7. A complete subject includes the words (such as articles, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases) that describe the noun in a phrase. Crossing out prepositional phrases is one helpful way to isolate the simple subject.
8. A compound subject is two or more nouns that perform the same action or are described by the same verb.

Verbs: Forms and Tenses 4

[*The first description of this photograph uses only* ***being verbs****, while the second uses mostly* ***action verbs****. How is the effect different? Why are action verbs more effective in many writing situations? When might being verbs be more appropriate?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Verb forms
- Present tense
- Past tense
- Future tense
- Helping verbs
- Perfect tenses
- Progressive tenses
- Irregular verbs
- Verb tense sequences and unneeded tense shifts

Being verbs

These **are** broadswords. The broadsword, a popular choice in beginning stage-fighting classes, **is** not sharp edged. Generally, one sword **will be** between 2 and 3 pounds in weight.

Action verbs

Two student actors **practice** the art of stage combat. In this scene, the performers **will play** enemies dueling to a violent death, so they **must rehearse** each beat of the fight carefully. Here, one student **lunges** as the other one **blocks**.

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Verbs are one of the most important types of words in our language. In Chapter 4, we saw how they work with subjects and learned that without verbs, we cannot form sentences. However, verbs can pose challenges because they take so many different forms and can serve a variety of functions in a sentence. In this chapter we will look at the forms verbs take, paying special attention to **tense** (time change in verbs).

English verbs come in two varieties: **regular** (the vast majority) and **irregular.** In both cases they may appear in one of five different **forms**.

THE FIVE FORMS OF VERBS

	Base Form	Past Tense	Past Participle	Present Participle	*-s* Ending
Regular	talk	talked	talked	talking	talks
Irregular	speak	spoke	spoken	speaking	speaks

English Review Note

Verb tenses and forms can be challenging. Additional practice opportunities are available at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

The base form of a verb is the one in the dictionary: *walk*, *talk*, *eat*. The past tense of regular verbs is created by adding *-d* or *-ed* to the base form, whereas irregular verbs form their past tense in other ways, including vowel changes: *sing/sang*, *speak/spoke*, *drink/drank*. We usually form the past participle, like the past, by adding *-d* or *-ed* and the present participle by adding *-ing*. The last form uses *-s* or *-es* to create almost all third-person singular present tenses: *he talks, she talks, it talks, somebody talks*.

We can combine these five verb forms to create twelve tenses, which we can reduce to the three most familiar: **present**, **past**, and **future**.

Present Tense

The **present tense** has several uses, in general showing action happening either right now or continuously: "Jamie's heart *beats* rapidly." Here are four other uses:

To show habitual action:	Roxanne *bathes* every morning.
To express general truths:	Daffodils *bloom* in the spring.
To discuss works of art:	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows *completes* the series.
To refer to future events (sometimes):	The plane *arrives* in an hour.

Notice that only one form in the present tense differs from the others, the ***-s*** ending used with *he*, *she*, *it*, and many indefinite pronouns (*each*, *no one*, etc.):

I dream	we dream
you dream	you (plural) dream
he, she, it, everyone dreams	they dream

ACTIVITY 4.1 *Finding Present Tense Verbs*

In the following sentences underline the present tense verbs once. Remember that infinitives (*to run*), participles (*sleeping* baby/*broken* toy), and gerunds (*recycling* is useful) are not verbs (see Chapter 5).

EXAMPLE: On clear nights I watch for satellites and shooting stars.

1. Jack takes candid pictures of his family all of the time.
2. Some insects in the desert drink water droplets from their own bodies.

3. Tomatoes grow well only in full sun.
4. Eleven hydraulic cylinders work together to lower the convertible Mercedes top.
5. Four-hundred-pound jellyfish swim in the Sea of Japan.
6. J. S. G. Boggs creates artwork resembling the currency used in many countries.
7. Each year air conditioning uses one sixth of the energy that U.S. consumers purchase.
8. Recycling rechargeable batteries helps reduce pollution.

ACTIVITY 4.2 *Using Your Own Present Tense Verbs*

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with the present tense verbs listed below.

inhales	knows	continue	make	use
deactivate	say	gobbles	hope	reduces

EXAMPLE: Emma Watson *plays* the role of Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter movies.

1. Most people _____ they hate to clean windows.
2. Small, portable DVD players _____ road trips more enjoyable.
3. Toni _____ her food and _____ her sodas.
4. To increase fuel efficiency, some cars _____ several cylinders while cruising.
5. Nobody _____ how many professional athletes _____ steroids.
6. Many residents of New Orleans still _____ that the government will help them.
7. Despite the dangers of global warming, carbon emissions _____ to grow.
8. Eating locally grown food _____ air pollution by cutting fuel used in transporting food over long distances.

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Past Tense

The simple **past tense** tells about actions occurring in the past that do not continue into the present. Regular verbs form their past by adding *-d* and *-ed* to the base:

Beth *hauled* the groceries into the house.

The action occurred one time and was finished. Notice that unlike the third person singular present (*-s*), there is no ending change in the third person singular past tense.

I hauled	we hauled
you hauled	you (plural) hauled
he, she, it hauled	they hauled

Irregular verbs, however, change their spellings in the past tense, sometimes radically, like these: *eat/ate*, *kneel/knelt*, *keep/kept*. We will discuss irregular verbs later in this chapter.



Take care not to confuse *feel/felt*, *fall/fell*, *think/thought*, or *teach/taught*.

ACTIVITY 4.3 *Finding Past Tense Verbs*

The following paragraph uses both present and past tense verbs. Locate and underline the past tense verbs once. Remember that infinitives (*to run*), participles (*sleeping* baby), and gerunds (*recycling* is useful) are not verbs (see Chapter 5).

For people who know its history, the Bermuda Triangle excites a great deal of curiosity. Christopher Columbus, on his voyage to the New World, first noticed something wrong with the waters of the Bermuda Triangle. In his logbook, he noted "flaming balls of fire whizzing through powder-blue skies" and "glowing streaks of white on the surface"—the same things others observed about the Triangle nearly five centuries later. U.S. astronauts orbiting the Earth described "mysterious patches of light and foam" off Bermuda. Beyond the strange sightings, history records many disappearances in the Triangle, the most dramatic being the missing Navy squadron Flight 19, which vanished on December 5, 1945, off the coast of Florida.

ACTIVITY 4.4 *Finding More Past Tense Verbs*

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with the past tense verbs listed below.

talked	disappeared	reported	radioed
vanished	received	ordered	shouted

EXAMPLE: Around 3:15 the planes *started* back to base.

1. The radiomen at the Ft. Lauderdale Naval Air Station _____ an unusual message.
2. The flight leader, Lieutenant Charles Taylor, _____ that the squadron seemed to be off course.
3. The tower _____ the flight to head west.
4. However, Lieutenant Taylor then _____ that the compass was not working.
5. The pilots of the planes _____ among themselves about running low on fuel.
6. They _____ that the gyros on the planes were going crazy.
7. Not long after this, the entire squadron _____.
8. A rescue plane that was sent out also _____.

Future Tense

The final simple tense is the **future**, which we use to show anticipated action. We usually form this tense by adding the helping verb *will* to the base verb: "Modesta *will* compete in the district spelling contest this month." Notice that unlike the third person singular present (*-s*), there is no ending change in the third person singular future tense.

I will compete	we will compete
you will compete	you (plural) will compete
he, she, it will compete	they will compete

English Review Note

Be careful to use the correct verb form after *will*. Correct: "He will *compete*." Incorrect: "He will *competes*."

ACTIVITY 4.5 *Finding Future Tense Verbs*

In the following sentences underline the future tense verbs once. Remember that infinitives (*to run*), participles (*sleeping* baby), and gerunds (*recycling* is useful) are not verbs (see Chapter 5).

EXAMPLE: Takako will climb to the top of Mount Fuji this summer.

1. The raves in Miami will continue as long as they don't get out of hand.
2. Bobby Jenks will pitch another successful close for the White Sox tomorrow.
3. Harrah's Biloxi Grand Casino will reopen to the public soon.
4. Harrison Ford will appear in one more Indiana Jones film.
5. The city will renovate Washington Park this summer.
6. As global warming continues, hurricanes will grow ever more powerful.
7. Hiro will teach me a little about origami this weekend.
8. The Great Salt Lake will become saltier as its water evaporates.

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ACTIVITY 4.6 *Choosing Future Tense Verbs*

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with whatever future tense verb makes sense to you.

EXAMPLE: When people stop damaging a part of the natural world, it often *will heal* itself.

1. In the upcoming election, most people _____ for a candidate they can relate to.
2. If conditions are favorable, life _____ .
3. Whales _____ together to corral a school of herring.
4. Perhaps "chill pills" _____ larger NFL players from dying of heatstroke.
5. Most Muslims _____ to make the pilgrimage to Mecca once in their lifetime.
6. If you apply it too close to your eyes, sunscreen _____ them.
7. A tattoo _____ for a lifetime unless it is surgically removed.
8. If I get through this composition class alive, I _____ my professor.

Helping Verbs

To form verb tenses, English uses helping verbs with main verbs in a combination known as a **verb phrase.**

Common Helping Verbs

The most common helpers are forms of the words *be, do,* and *have,* listed in the chart below. Other typical helping verbs are *may, might, must, can, could, should, will,* and *would.* (For more on helping verbs, see Chapter 3.)

CHART OF COMMON HELPING VERBS

To Be		To Do	To Have
am	were	does	has
are	been	did	had
is	being	done	
was			

English Review Note

Review this chart; take care not to confuse *be*, *do*, and *have*.

When combined with main verbs, helpers create phrases like the following:

The whole team *was* hoping for a miracle.

After eating the whole pizza, Arianna *did* feel a little sick.

I found out that my best friend was the one who *had* "borrowed" my car last night.

I *am* going to the concert later.

ACTIVITY 4.7 *Finding Helping Verbs*

Underline the helping verbs in the following sentences. Use the preceding chart as a reference.

EXAMPLE: I saw that my younger sister was sneaking out of the house again last night.

1. The real estate agent told Erica that she does need to make a decision.
2. Community service is making a difference in the lives of many college students.
3. Enrique did finish the sculpture on time.
4. Vincent has auditioned for the part.
5. We are going bungee jumping on Saturday.
6. The archeologists found a mummy that had been preserved in ice.
7. I am hoping to go to the Super Bowl this year.
8. A group in London has published a list of the top 100 mammals on the verge of extinction.

Modals

Aside from *be*, *do*, and *have*, there is another common group of helpers often called **modals:** *may/might, can/could, will/would, should, must.* In this group the modals *can* and *will* express a sense of the present or future, while *could* and *would* generally express a sense of the past or future. Modals are used to express requests, doubt, capability, willingness, necessity, and advisability, as in the following sentences:

English Review Note

You may need additional practice with modals. Make sure you use the correct verb form after modals.

Request: *Will (would, could, can)* you loan me the book?

Doubt: I *might (may, could)* go to the movie with you.

Capability: I *can (could)* still make it to the top of the climbing wall.

Willingness: I *will (would)* help you with the groceries.

Necessity: To do well, we *must* study for the final exam.

Advisability: Whenever possible, we *should* avoid foods that use hydrogenated oils.

Modals help refine the meaning of main verbs and are especially useful in softening requests. For example, while eating dinner, we might say, "Hand me the butter" as a command. Or we could reduce the command to a request, using one of the modals:

Would you hand me the butter?



The base form of a verb always follows the modal.

MODAL CHART

may	can	will	should
might	could	would	must

ACTIVITY 4.8 *Finding Modal Verbs*

Review the chart above; then underline the modal helping verbs in the following sentences.

EXAMPLE: The government must invest in restoring the levees because future storms could wreak even greater damage.

1. Narwhales may soon be endangered, so the International Whaling Commission should limit how many can be taken.
2. My son may be the most brilliant physicist of all time.
3. Limiting the influence of lobbyists in Washington could help politicians be more ethical.
4. Classical guitar should be played with fingers, not a pick.
5. Aaron told me that he might start grilling with a solar cooker.
6. Eleven thousand years ago, people must have been terrified of the fearsome saber-toothed tiger.
7. When people work together, they can more easily solve their problems.
8. Jordan said she would go on a Holland America Line cruise someday if she could afford it.

ACTIVITY 4.9 *Choosing Modal Verbs*

Referring to the preceding modal verb chart, fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the helper verb that seems best to you. In some sentences several modals will work.

EXAMPLE: If you like to drive fast, you *should* try the German Autobahn.

1. Magdalena _____ like to visit Australia to see koalas in the wild.
2. My uncle _____ appear in court on the seventeenth if he wants to keep his license.
3. Armadillos _____ leap into the air if a car passes over them.
4. Andrew _____ win the Kansas lottery someday, but he _____ not count on it.
5. I _____ have won the game, but I scratched on the eight ball.
6. Cigarettes _____ damage a smoker's heart and lungs.
7. I know Bob _____ be the best guitar player at next year's convention.
8. For years to come, Argentina _____ be proud of its World Cup victory in 2007.

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Perfect Tenses

The three main tenses of present, past, and future help express many essential time relationships, but they do not cover them all. To discuss an action finished earlier in time than another, we use the **perfect tenses,** present, past, and future. To form a perfect tense, we put *has, have,* or *had* in front of a **past participle.** The past participle for regular verbs is the same as the past tense (base verb usually ending in *-d* or *-ed*). However, irregular verbs often—but not always—change forms in their past participle (often ending with a *-t* or an *-n*). (For more discussion of irregular verb forms, see pp. 63–70.) Notice the similarities and differences between the simple past and the past participle for the regular and irregular verbs listed below.

CHART FOR VERB FORMS

	Base Form	Simple Past	Past Participle (*-d/-ed*)
Regular verb	talk	talked	had (have, has) talked
Irregular verbs	speak	spoke	had (have, has) spoken
	begin	began	had (have, has) begun
	catch	caught	had (have, has) caught

Present Perfect

The **present perfect** is the tense that describes actions begun in the past and finished at some unknown time or that continue into the present. With this tense we use either *has* or *have* before the past participle. However, if we mention a specific time, we use the simple past rather than the present perfect. Compare the examples of present perfect and simple past below:

1. **Present perfect:** Janice *has* talked to her mother about the problem.
2. **Simple past:** Janice talked to her mother about the problem yesterday.
3. **Present perfect:** I *have* flown to Denver many times on business.
4. **Simple past**: I flew to Denver last Monday for a meeting.

Sentence 1 tells us that Janice has spoken with her mother at some point in the past, but we cannot say when, so we use the present perfect tense. Because sentence 2 tells us when Janice spoke with her mother, "yesterday," we use the simple past. Sentence 3 says that the speaker has flown many times, and we can assume that he or she will continue to fly; therefore, we use the present perfect tense. However, sentence 4 tell us that the speaker flew to Denver on Monday, an act started and finished in the past, so we use the simple past.

ACTIVITY 4.10 *Choosing Simple Past or Present Perfect*

In the following sentences underline the correct verb form in parentheses, either simple past or present perfect. Refer to the explanation and examples above for help.

EXAMPLES: My dog (learned/has learned) to nudge his water bowl when he wants a drink.

Cindy (found/has found) my note this morning.

1. Arvin, California, (became/has become) the smoggiest town in the United States.

2. The band The Fray (signed/has signed) its first recording contract in 2004.
3. Some people (developed/have developed) an interest in scattering their cremated ashes around trees.
4. The iPod Hi-Fi (replaced/has replaced) my old stereo speakers.
5. Bill (rode/has ridden) his Harley down to the Buffalo River this weekend.
6. The soundtrack for *High School Musical* (sold/has sold) 2.6 million copies.
7. Samantha (practiced/has practiced) flute for an hour and is still playing.
8. Samantha (practiced/has practiced) flute for an hour and then quit.

ACTIVITY 4.11 *Choosing Simple Past and Present Perfect*

In the following sentences look at the base verb form in parentheses, decide on simple past or present perfect, and then write your answer in the space provided.

EXAMPLE: Computers *have evolved* (to evolve) faster than anyone could have imagined.

1. Television _____ (to change) a great deal over the past 60 years.
2. One major change that _____ (to amaze) audiences of the forties _____ (to be) the switch from black-and-white to color.
3. When, for example, *The Wizard of Oz* _____ (to change) from black-and-white to color after Dorothy _____ (to land) in Oz, people in audiences _____ (to gasp) and could scarcely believe their eyes.
4. Another milestone in TV viewing _____ (to occur) when the number of channels _____ (to increase).
5. The arrival of cable television _____ (to increase) the number of channels available to viewers from three to hundreds.
6. As technology _____ (to advance), satellites _____ (to provide) even greater viewing options.
7. Science fiction writers _____ (to predict) that television in the form of holograms will one day be in our living rooms.
8. For better or worse, TV _____ (to become) America's chief source of entertainment.

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Past Perfect

The **past perfect** is the verb tense that allows us to show one action happening further back in time than another past action. We form this tense with the helper verb *had* and the past participle. If we are simply referring to one past act (rather than showing actions begun at different times in the past), we use the simple past tense. Notice how the simple past (underlined once) and the past perfect (underlined twice) work together in the sentences below:

1. Rosalina *had finished* her report just before the phone rang.
2. Brandon *was* late picking up his grandmother, who *had* arrived at the airport an hour earlier.

In sentence 1 Rosalina completed her report in the past, and then, still in the past, the phone rang. Since completing the report is farther back in time, we use the past perfect tense. The phone ringing is in the simple past. In sentence 2 the

grandmother arrived at the airport farther back in time than when Brandon came to pick her up. Therefore, we use the past perfect for the arrival and the simple past for the picking up. Notice that the past perfect tense can appear before the simple past, as in sentence 1, or after as in sentence 2.

ACTIVITY 4.12 *Choosing Past Perfect or Simple Past*

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with the correct form of the past perfect or the simple past. Be sure to use the helper *had* with the past perfect.

EXAMPLE: The train *had left* (to leave) before Kyoko *arrived* (to arrive).

1. I _____ (to see) that some deer _____ (to eat) the acorns in my front yard that morning.
2. When Danny _____ (to finish) grilling the hamburgers, we all _____ (to fill) our plates.
3. I _____ (to drive) past the exit before I _____ (to realize) that I _____ (to miss) it.
4. After the house painter _____ (to finish) the last window, she _____ (to leave) for the night.
5. Many nurse sharks around Ambergris Cay _____ (to be) so well fed that they _____ (to be) almost tame.
6. Since he _____ (to plan) to climb Mt. Harvard, Bob _____ (to give) himself 10 weeks to get in shape.
7. After he _____ (to check) his watch and _____ (to see) the time, Dave _____ (to call) home.
8. Megan _____ (to jog) 5 miles, _____(to shower), and _____ (to eat) breakfast before Matthew _____ (to wake) up.

ACTIVITY 4.13 *Finding Verbs in the Past Perfect and Simple Past*

In the following paragraph underline the simple past tense verbs once and the past perfect verbs twice. Notice that the helper verb *had* can also be a main verb, as it is in the first sentence below. In that case it is in the simple past.

Crashing Down the Arkansas

On our trip this summer down the Arkansas River in Colorado, we had many exciting moments. Ben, the river guide, explained how dangerous this class III and IV white-water river could be. He told us about a rafter who had drowned a week ago, and this story made us all pay closer attention. Even so, a few moments after we had put the eight-person raft into the swift current, we lost our first paddler overboard. However, we quickly picked her up and found that she had only bruised a

leg. She was mostly just wet, cold, and embarrassed. A mile downstream the current increased because the river had narrowed. The water got rougher, and we remembered the story we had heard about the drowned rafter. Boulders large and small raced past us. Several paddlers fell to the bottom of the raft, one crushing the liter water bottle I had brought. Sunglasses and hats said goodbye to their owners as icy waves splashed over the side. Then the raft hung up on a submerged rock, and we found ourselves spinning out of control, bouncing off boulders and the cliff face on the riverside. Somehow Ben reorganized the crew just before we headed into the Widow Maker, a class IV chute through a snaking minefield of boulders, rocky ledges, and holes in the river! By the time we reached the take-out point, we were exhausted and chilled but happy that we had made it.

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Future Perfect

The **future perfect** is the verb tense that lets us show one action being completed before another future act. We almost always begin this tense with the helper verb *will*, though *shall* is sometimes used instead. *Will* is followed by the helper verb *have* plus a past participle. Note the example sentences below.

1. Lauren *will have* practiced her spelling words twenty times before the test on Thursday.
2. By the end of July, Barry Bonds almost certainly *will have* hit 751 career home runs.

In sentence 1 Lauren will keep studying those spelling words as the week progresses until the more distant future event of the test. Sentence 2 predicts that Bonds will hit more home runs in the future, but he will do so before the more distant future date of the end of July.



Take care to learn the difference between the future and the future perfect tenses. Be careful with the words used in the time clause.

ACTIVITY 4.14 Deciding on Future Perfect Verbs

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with the proper future perfect form of the verb.

EXAMPLE: Many happy high school seniors *will have crossed* (to cross) the stage before graduation is over.

1. Thuyet _____ (to save) $3,000 toward a car by November.
2. By the end of spring, Hannah _____ (to travel) down 70 miles of the Buffalo River.
3. Before the end of her short life, a queen army ant _____ (to lay) as many as 300,000 eggs.
4. The storm surge _____ (to move) 3 miles inland before it subsides.
5. When we reach the fifteenth floor we _____ (to climb) 600 stairs.

6. Ted says that he _____ (to catch) his limit of brook trout by sunset.
7. Some think that people _____ (to leave) our solar system before the twenty-second century.
8. By the time classes begin, half the students _____ (to sign) up for extracurricular activities.

Progressive Tenses

Whereas the perfect tenses express when acts are completed, the **progressive tenses** show ongoing action within tenses—present, past, or future. While we use the past participle (*-d/-ed*) to form the perfect tenses, we use the **present participle** for the progressive tenses. The present participle consists of an *-ing* attached to the base form of a verb, regular or irregular (*talk/talking* or *speak/speaking*). When we add a form of the helper verb *to be* (*is*, *am*, *are*, *was*, *were*, *been*, *being*) before the present participle, we have a progressive tense (*is talking* or *was speaking*), as shown in the chart below:

VERB FORMS

	Base Form	Simple Past	Past Participle	Present Participle (*-ing*)
Regular verb	talk	talked	had (have, has) talked	is (was) talking
Irregular verbs	speak	spoke	had (have, has) spoken	is (was) speaking
	begin	began	had (have, has) begun	is (was) beginning
	catch	caught	had (have, has) caught	is (was) catching

Present Progressive

The **present progressive** tells of ongoing action in the present and uses the helping verbs *am*, *is*, or *are* before a present participle. Sentences using this tense imply or sometimes use phrases like *right now* or *at this moment*. In the following sentences, you can contrast this usage with the simple present, which suggests repeated or habitual action.

English Review Note

Some languages do not have the simple present and the present progressive tenses.

1. **Present progressive:** Presently, Rajiv *is* watching the cardinals and chickadees at his feeder.
2. **Simple present:** Every morning Rajiv watches the cardinals and chickadees at his feeder.
3. **Present progressive:** The Royals's first baseman *is* sliding into home.
4. **Simple present:** The Royals's first baseman slides into home when the throw is close.

Sentence 1 states that Rajiv is watching the birds at that moment, whereas sentence 2 suggests a habitual act. Sentence 3 implies that the base runner is sliding at that point in time, while sentence 4 tells what the player does under a certain circumstance.

ACTIVITY 4.15 *Choosing Present Progressive or Simple Present*

In the following sentences underline the appropriate tense, either simple present or present progressive, in the parentheses.

EXAMPLE: Ashley (plays/is playing) with her daughter every day.

1. The hall is packed, and everyone (crowds/is crowding) toward the stage.
2. I (try/am trying) to find a parking space and am having little luck.
3. The checker (rings up/is ringing up) my groceries right now.
4. If a dog (eats/is eating) chocolate, the animal can become sick or die.
5. When Tom skydives, he usually (freefalls/is freefalling) for 5,000 feet.
6. The elephants (run/are running) from poachers who are firing at the herd.
7. My cat (laps up/is lapping up) her milk as I watch her from the table.
8. Right now the roofers (finish/are finishing) the job.

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ACTIVITY 4.16 *Switching to Present Progressive from Simple Present*

In the following sentences change the simple present tense verbs in parentheses to the present progressive. Use the helper verbs *am, is,* or *are*.

EXAMPLE: The car (spins) *is spinning* out of control.

1. I (skate) _____ with my daughter at Midwest Ice.
2. They (drive) _____ to work despite the travel advisory.
3. The children (play) _____ well together on the playground.
4. Ramon (gazes) _____ anxiously at the sky because it (thunders) _____ .
5. A tornado (threatens) _____ all of Johnson County.
6. Isabella and Olivia, who are best friends, (text message) _____ back and forth.
7. Martha Stewart (enjoys) _____ life after her brief stay in a minimum security prison.
8. The Arctic ice sheet (melts) _____ more each year.

Past Progressive

The **past progressive** describes ongoing action in the past and uses the helping verbs *was* and *were* before a present participle. Like the past perfect, it can indicate one action occurring before another, but the past progressive describes *ongoing* action that may immediately lead to another past action. As with the present progressive, the past progressive sometimes use phrases like *right now*, *currently*, or *at this moment*. In the following examples, you can contrast use of the past progressive with the simple past, which shows an action starting and finishing in the past.

1. **Past progressive:** Elaine *was* dusting the living room when Stephanie walked in.

2. **Simple past:** Yesterday Elaine dusted the living room, and Stephanie spilled the vacuum cleaner bag.

3. **Past progressive:** As they *were* walking through Shedd Aquarium, Gregor and Katrina saw an octopus squirt ink.

4. **Simple past:** Gregor and Katrina walked through Shedd Aquarium and saw an octopus squirt ink.

5. **Past progressive:** As I *was* cleaning the plates, Ben *was* putting them in the dishwasher.

Sentence 1 tells us that Elaine was in the process of dusting the room before the other past action of Stephanie walking in. Sentence 2 describes two completed past acts without indicating which happened first. In sentence 3 Gregor and Katrina saw the octopus while they were in the process of walking through the aquarium (an event that occurred in the past). In sentence 4 the couple might have seen the octopus at the start of their walk, during it, or just before they left. Sentence 5 describes two past actions occurring at the same time.

ACTIVITY 4.17 *Choosing Simple Past or Past Progressive*

In the following sentences underline the correct verb form in parentheses, either simple past or past progressive. Refer to the explanation and examples above for help.

EXAMPLE: Mai (walked/was walking) to the store when I waved to her.

1. Grace Littlebear (did/was doing) her algebra homework when the doorbell rang.
2. Tom (climbed/was climbing) a sheer rock face when he lost one of his carabiners.
3. Pink Floyd (jammed/was jamming) on stage when Syd Barrett threw himself into the audience.
4. This morning it rained, so I (went/was going) back to sleep.
5. As they (checked/were checking) into the hotel, Allen received a shocking phone call.
6. I (listened/was listening) to my dad lecture for two hours—a new record!
7. Vijay and Neha (watched/were watching) TV when the power went out.
8. The presidential hopefuls (visited/were visiting) Iowa early this year but gave few specific responses to detailed questions.

ACTIVITY 4.18 *Forming the Past Progressive*

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with the past progressive form of the verb listed in parentheses. Remember to use either the helper verb *was* or *were*.

EXAMPLE: Yesterday, Hosham *was driving* (to drive) to the bank when his car broke down.

1. I _____ (to hope) that Margot would meet me at the library.
2. They _____ (to race) down the ski slopes at Heavenly Valley.
3. Margaret _____ (to search) for her favorite brand of green tea.
4. Waves _____ (to hiss) up onto the white-sand beach.

5. Nobody _____ (to deny) the need for immediate action.
6. The U.S. space program _____ (to look) for a viable next-generation space vehicle.
7. Marine biologists _____ (to explore) the Marianna Trench when they spotted new life.
8. The new plasma TV _____ (to flicker) from power surges in the neighborhood.

Future Progressive

The **future progressive** describes ongoing action in the future and, like the simple future, uses the helper verb *will*. However, the future progressive also requires the helper verb *be* in front of a present participle. Often there is little difference between the future progressive and the simple future, as you might notice in the following sentences.

1. **Future progressive:** Mark *will be* playing lead guitar at the concert this afternoon.
2. **Simple future:** Mark *will* play lead guitar at the concert this afternoon.
3. **Future progressive:** The geese *will be* flying north soon.
4. **Simple future:** The geese *will* fly north soon.

English Review Note

Work with your instructor to learn which verbs may not be used in the future progressive unless they have special meaning.

ACTIVITY 4.19 Forming the Future Past Progressive

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with the future progressive form of the verb in parentheses. Remember to use the helper verbs *will be* before a present participle.

EXAMPLE: By the end of the museum tour, your mind *will be reeling* (to reel).

1. It _____ (to rain) all afternoon.
2. The wind turbines that they are building in western Kansas _____ (to create) pollution-free power for many years to come.
3. Jackie _____ (to work) on her composition assignment for the rest of the day.
4. I _____ (to try) to program my TiVo for the next hour.
5. Andrea _____ (to teach) in China during the summer.
6. I _____ (to dig) the footings for my deck most of Sunday morning.
7. Hollywood _____ (to honor) Billy Crystal with a two-hour roast this weekend.
8. The Port Authority in New Jersey _____ (to spot-check) all bus passengers today.

Irregular Verbs

Regular verbs in English form their past tense by adding *-d* or *-ed* to the base or dictionary form (*walk/walked*), but **irregular verbs** do not follow that pattern. The past tense and past participle of irregular verbs are usually spelled

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differently from the base form—sometimes changing a vowel, sometimes changing consonants—and sometimes the spelling doesn't change at all. The best approach to handling these forms is to memorize them and, when in doubt, to consult a dictionary.

One way to memorize the irregular verbs that give you trouble is to write them out on your Improvement Chart in the back of this text when your teacher marks them on your paper. Or you can quiz yourself with the list of irregular verbs that follows and note the verbs you formed incorrectly. Identifying some common patterns in how the verbs are formed can also help your memorization. The chart that follows lists some common patterns.

COMMON IRREGULAR VERB FORM PATTERNS

	Present	Past	Past Participle
Identical present, past, and past participle forms	cost	cost	had cost
	hit	hit	had hit
	hurt	hurt	had hurt
Identical past and past participle forms	buy	bought	had bought
	catch	caught	had caught
	sit	sat	had sat
Similar vowel changes in present, past, and past participle among different verbs	blow	blew	had blown
	grow	grew	had grown
	throw	threw	had thrown

The most important irregular verb in English is *to be*. Because it is used so often both as a helper (*is* running) and on its own as a linking verb (Ethan *is* a kind man), you should learn its seven forms: *am*, *are*, *is*, *was*, *were*, *been*, *being*.

SEVEN FORMS OF *TO BE*

	Singular	Plural
Present	I am	we are
	you are	you are
	he, she, it is	they are
Past	I was	we were
	you were	you were
	he, she, it was	they were
Past participle	I had been	we had been
	you had been	you had been
	he, she, it had been	they had been

A list of the principal parts of some common irregular verbs follows.

COMMON IRREGULAR VERBS

Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle
arise	arose	arisen
awake	awoke	awoke/awakened
become	became	become
begin	began	begun
bend	bent	bent
bite	bit	bitten
bleed	bled	bled
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
bring	brought	brought
build	built	built
burst	burst	burst
buy	bought	bought
cast	cast	cast
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
come	came	come
cost	cost	cost
creep	crept	crept
cut	cut	cut
deal	dealt	dealt
dig	dug	dug
dive	dived/dove	dived
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
eat	ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen
feed	fed	fed
feel	felt	felt
fight	fought	fought
find	found	found
fit	fit	fit
fly	flew	flown
forget	forgot	forgotten
forgive	forgave	forgiven
freeze	froze	frozen

Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle
get	got	got/gotten
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
grow	grew	grown
hang	hung	hung
hang	hanged	hanged
have	had	had
hear	heard	heard
hide	hid	hidden
hit	hit	hit
hold	held	held
hurt	hurt	hurt
keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt	knelt
know	knew	known
lay (put)	laid	laid
lead	led	led
leave	left	left
lend	lent	lent
let	let	let
lie (recline)	lay	lain
light	lit/lighted	lit/lighted
lose	lost	lost
make	made	made
mean	meant	meant
meet	met	met
pay	paid	paid
prove	proved	proven
put	put	put
quit	quit	quit
read	read	read
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
run	ran	run
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
sell	sold	sold

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COMMON IRREGULAR VERBS (CONTINUED)

Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle
send	sent	sent
set	set	set
sew	sewed	sown/sowed
shake	shook	shaken
shine	shone/ shined	shone/shined
shoot	shot	shot
show	showed	shown
shrink	shrank	shrunk
shut	shut	shut
sing	sang	sung
sit	sat	sat
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
speak	spoke	spoken
spin	spun	spun
spend	spent	spent
spring	sprang	sprung
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck

Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle
sting	stung	stung
strike	struck	struck
swear	swore	sworn
sweep	swept	swept
swell	swell	swelled/swollen
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
throw	threw	thrown
upset	upset	upset
understand	understood	understood
wake	woke/ waked	woken/waked
wear	wore	worn
win	won	won
wind	wound	wound
write	wrote	written

ACTIVITY 4.20 *Forming Verbs in the Past and Past Perfect Tenses*

Referring to the chart of irregular verbs above, use the past and past participle forms to fill in the past and past perfect tenses of the following irregular verbs. Be sure to include the helper verb *had* with the past participle. The first verb has been done for you as an example.

Present	Past	Past Perfect
awake	awoke	had awoke/awakened
begin		
break		
bring		
buy		
catch		
choose		
eat		
forget		
give		

go		
keep		
know		
see		

ACTIVITY 4.21 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Forming the Past Participles of Irregular Verbs***

The following sentences are written with present tense irregular verbs. In the blanks provided, work with a partner to change these verbs to past participles using the helper verbs *has* and *have*.

EXAMPLE: Winter (brings) *has brought* cold weather, snow, and icy streets to the Midwest.

1. Craig (leaves) _____ the bread in the oven too long.
2. McDonald's (sells) _____ billions of hamburgers.
3. Unfortunately, I (buy) _____ lots of them.
4. Deer (hide) _____ behind the shed in back of my neighbor's house.
5. Morgan (flies) _____ to Phoenix twice in the past month.
6. Lance Armstrong (became) _____ the first bicyclist to win the Tour de France seven times.
7. Not many people (swim) _____ across the Mississippi River.
8. As a member of the Society for Creative Anachronisms, Paul (rides) _____ a Percheron stallion in his battle simulations.

Problem Verbs

Among the irregular verbs listed above, several can cause additional problems because they are each easily confused with another verb. These problem pairs are *lie/lay, sit/set,* and *rise/raise.*

PROBLEM VERBS

Base Form	Past Tense	Past Participle	Present Participle	-s Ending
lie	lay	lain	lying	lies
lay	laid	laid	laying	lays
sit	sat	sat	sitting	sits
set	set	set	setting	sets
rise	rose	risen	rising	rises
raise	raised	raised	raising	raises

Lie versus Lay

- ***Lie*** means to rest or recline, as in: I'm tired. I think I will *lie* down now.
- ***Lay*** means to place something, as in: I will *lay* the book on the table.

English Review Note

It is easy to confuse the past participles of *fall* (*fell*) and *feel* (*felt*) because they are similar in pronunciation. Review the chart on pp. 65–66 to learn the difference between the words and their various forms.



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Sit versus Set

- ***Sit*** means to be seated, as in: I will *sit* in the chair.
  It also means to be situated, as in: The glass is *sitting* on the table.
- ***Set*** means to place something, as in: I will *set* the cup on the counter.

Rise versus Raise

- ***Rise*** means to go up, as in: The balloon is *rising* in the sky.
- ***Raise*** means to lift, as in: I will *raise* the window to get some air.

ACTIVITY 4.22 *Choosing Verb Forms: Lie/Lay, Sit/Set, Rise/Raise*

In the following sentences underline the correct form in the verb pairs in parentheses.

EXAMPLE: Working on her tan, Francine decided to (lay/lie) by the pool.

1. The CIA developed a robot surveillance dragonfly 30 years ago that would (raise/rise) off the ground and fly effectively for short distances.
2. Marybeth said to her son, "(Sit/Set) the groceries on the table, and we'll (set/sit) for a while."
3. Tong has (laid/lain) awake at nights wondering how much he would need to start his business.
4. Angelo (lay/laid) the flashlight on the table.
5. Some people must use a sleep aid at night or (lay/lie) awake for hours.
6. The harp seal had been (laying/lying) on the ice most of the morning.
7. I found the iPod (sitting/setting) on the floor.
8. The attorney said, "My client never (laid/lay) a finger on the plaintiff."

Phrasal Verbs

When you are trying to link subjects with verbs in sentences, **phrasal verbs**—also known as **two-part verbs**—can be confusing. Phrasal verbs use a main verb or verb phrase followed by a preposition or an adverb.

VERB + **ADVERB** = PHRASAL VERB
figure **out**

VERB PHRASE + **ADVERB** = PHRASAL VERB
to figure **out**

VERB + **PREPOSITION** = PHRASAL VERB
hand **in**

VERB PHRASE + **PREPOSITION** = PHRASAL VERB
to hand **in**

If you come across verbs in your own sentences that seem incomplete without another word attached, you may be using a phrasal verb. They are common in our language, especially in informal usage. Some phrasal verbs can be separated (as in, *to ask* a friend *out*); others cannot be (as in, *get in* a car). Brief lists of common phrasal verbs follow.

SEPARABLE TWO-PART VERBS

Verb	Meaning	Example
ask out	invite on a date	Gabriel *asked* Sergei *out* to a movie.
ask over	invite to a place	Javier *asked* Marta *over* to his home.
back up	support	I hope my friends will *back* me *up*.

blow up	destroy	The construction crew had to *blow* the bridge *up*.
break down	disassemble	Sveta *broke* her tent *down* in the morning.
bring back	return	Frederick had to *bring* the videos *back*.
call off	cancel	The promoters had to *call* the concert *off*.
call up	telephone	Hector was too nervous to *call* Elena *up*.
carry out	do	The Marines *carried* their mission *out*.
cover up	hide	Politicians are always trying to *cover* something *up*.
drag out	prolong	Dad *dragged* the lecture *out* for an hour.



Two-word verbs are idiomatic and may cause difficulty. It can also be challenging to figure out which verbs are separable. Don't hesitate to look them up in a dictionary or handbook.

INSEPARABLE TWO-PART VERBS

Verb	Meaning	Example
call on	visit, ask	Professor Sung *called on* Amy to answer.
catch up (with)	reach	I *caught up* with the bus at the corner.
come across	discover	Jesus *came across* a great DVD sale.
drop by	visit	My cousin *dropped by* unexpectedly.
drop out	leave	Too many teenagers are *dropping out* of school.
get along (with)	coexist	Everyone *gets along* with Alex.
get in	enter	Tomas *got in* the car.
get off	leave	The passengers *got off* the plane.
get on	enter	The passengers *got on* the plane.
get out (of)	leave, avoid	Ho Chul *got out* of the final exam.
get over	recover from	Marco *got over* the reprimand from his boss.

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ACTIVITY 4.23 *Finding Phrasal Verbs*

In the following sentences underline the phrasal verbs twice and their subjects once. Refer to the lists above for help, and remember that sometimes the verb parts will be separated.

EXAMPLES: Tina checked out ten books from the library on Wednesday.

Dad said, "You kids clean that mess up!"

1. Artie got off the subway at 58th Street.
2. The lieutenant carried his orders out.
3. While searching the victim's files, the detective came across a clue to the murder.
4. After a six-month investigation, Frank brought the criminal in.
5. After waving to her friends on the beach, Ava said she would catch up with them on the boardwalk.

6. The National Weather Service called the tornado watch off.
7. Dora's boss dropped by her office and found her working hard.
8. Enron covered its criminal actions up for years before finally being caught.

Verb Tense Sequences and Unneeded Tense Shifts

When writing, we often combine verb tenses, speaking in the present, past, and future. As we move from a subordinate clause to a main clause, however, we should be sure that the verb tenses indicate a logical time relationship so that we do not confuse the reader. We can show many time relationships by combining tenses, including the following:

1. **Present/present:** Tywon *wins* the scholarship because he *is* a hard worker.
2. **Past/past:** Tywon *won* the scholarship because he *worked* hard every day in high school.
3. **Past/present:** Tywon *won* the scholarship because he *works* hard every day in school.
4. **Future/present perfect/present progressive:** Tywon *will win* the scholarship because he *has worked* hard every day in school and *is spending* weeks studying for his SATs.

Sentence 1 tells us that Tywon gets the award in the present because he is at the moment so diligent. Sentence 2 says that he won in the past because of his past efforts. The third sentence states that Tywon earned the prize in the past because of his habitual, ongoing efforts. Sentence 4 speculates that he will win in the future because of his ongoing efforts in the past that are still ongoing in the present and because he is currently in the process of preparing even more.

However, there are also illogical tense relationships that we want to avoid, as in the following:

> Tywon *wins/has won* the scholarship because he *will work* hard every day in high school.

Logically, Tywon's hard work should lead to his winning the scholarship, not the reverse.

One of the most common ways that writers confuse their readers is to shift needlessly from present to past (and sometimes back again). Notice how the tenses shift in the following passage:

Inconsistent tenses

> Sadly, my uncle *died* at the age of 50 from a heart attack. He *was* a humorous man, and he *liked* to play with children. In particular, he *loves* his 12-year-old grandson, who often *sleeps* at his house. Occasionally on the weekends my uncle, his grandson, and I *went* fishing. My uncle always *jokes* around with people and *called* me by my nickname, Simmi.

Since this passage describes a person who has passed away, the writer should stick with the past tense all the way through.

Consistent tenses

> Sadly, my uncle died at the age of 50 from a heart attack. He was a humorous man, and he liked to play with children. In particular, he *loved* his 12-year-old grandson, who often *slept* at his house. Occasionally on the weekends my uncle, his grandson, and I went fishing. My uncle always *joked* around with people and called me by my nickname, Simmi.

ACTIVITY 4.25 *Choosing Consistent Verb Tenses*

In the following sentences underline the correct verb tense (in parentheses).

EXAMPLE: Most of the time when I visited his house, he (jokes/joked) with me.

1. My uncle also helped me with my math, and now whenever I (study/studied) math, I (miss/missed) him.
2. Once my uncle gave me a gold wristwatch for Christmas, and that watch (reminds/reminded) me of him.
3. I (remember/remembered) my grandparents fondly, and I think of them often.
4. Because they lived so far away, I only (visit/visited) them once a year, during summer break.
5. My grandmother once gave me a pair of tiny diamond earrings, a gift that I (treasure/treasured).
6. My grandmother was beautiful; however, she (is/was) a shy person.
7. Whenever I visited her, we (cook/cooked) dinner together.
8. She was the only person who ever (calls/called) me Simran, and I (am/was) sad that she died of a heart attack when I (am/was) only 25 years old.

ACTIVITY 4.26 *Editing for Consistent Verb Tenses*

In the following paragraph underline each verb or verb phrase twice and each subject once. When you find an error in verb tense consistency (past or present tense), cross out the verb and write the correction in the space above it. The topic sentence of the paragraph is marked as an example.

What, Joel, *Another* Accident?

My most vivid memories from childhood ~~were~~ are of all the trouble I caused. When I was 10, my friends and I like to do a lot of Evel Knievel jumps. One day we decide to take my little sister's red and yellow Playschool car and jump it on a ramp that we had built in the backyard, but there is one big problem. My friends and I were too big to fit in the car and do the jump ourselves. So we decide to put my 5-year-old sister, Sara, in the car. We were being careful with her, we thought, because we had use duct tape to strap her in so that she won't fall out, and we had put a pillow inside of what we jokingly call "the death trap." What harm could come to Sara? She has "seatbelts"

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and "airbags." We pull her to the top of the ramp, pushed hard, and down she went—even faster than we had hoped. She makes the jump with about 6 inches of air, then came down a little too hard. When we heard Sara crying, we run to the car and untaped her only to find that she has a broken arm. My dad grounded me for a whole month for that little stunt, but it didn't slow me down. I am bound to get in trouble for the rest of my childhood.

HINT

See Chapter 22 for more on using **narration** (telling stories).



ACTIVITY 4.27 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Verbs to Tell a Story*

Write a short account (like Joel's in Activity 4.26) about a memorable childhood experience when you misbehaved, made a mistake, or witnessed another child getting into trouble. Exchange stories with a classmate, and check for correct and consistent use of tenses.



ACTIVITY 4.28 WORKING ONLINE: *Verbs Review*

Take the Chapter 4 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. All verbs are either regular or irregular and have five forms: **base, past tense, past participle, present participle,** and **-s ending.**
2. Learning to use verb tenses correctly is one of the most important skills for a writer to develop.
3. There are twelve verb tenses; the three most familiar are past, present, and future.
4. The **present tense** shows action happening either right now or continuously.
5. The **past tense** shows action that happened in the past but is no longer happening.
6. The **future tense** shows anticipated action.
7. To discuss an action finished earlier in time than another, we use the **perfect tenses**, present, past, and future. To form a perfect tense, we put *has, have,* or *had* in front of a **past participle.** Most past participles use a *-d/-ed* ending.
8. To show ongoing action within tenses—present, past, or future—we use the **progressive tenses.** The progressive is formed by placing a helping

verb (*is, am, are, was, were, been, or being*) in front of a **present participle** (which ends in *-ing*).

9. The past tense and past participle of **irregular verbs** are formed in a variety of ways, often by changing the base verb's spelling or keeping the same form across several tenses. The best approach to learning irregular verb forms is to memorize those that are commonly used. When in doubt, consult this chapter's chart or a dictionary.
10. Writers should be aware that the following verbs may cause confusion: *lie/lay, sit/set,* and *rise/raise*.
11. **Phrasal verbs**, which use a main verb or verb phrase followed by a preposition or an adverb, may cause confusion. Writers should know which two-part verbs are separable and which are not.
12. When moving from a subordinate clause to a main one, writers may combine verb tenses; however, they must make sure that the verb tenses indicate a logical time relationship.

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Subject/Verb Agreement 5

[*Just as musicians must tune their instruments so the notes flow smoothly together, so too must writers "tune" the parts of their sentences, especially the subjects and verbs, to help the ideas flow smoothly. Write a brief paragraph that explores an image of harmony, people or things getting along well together.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Intervening words
- Verbals: Incomplete verbs
- Compound subjects
- Indefinite pronouns
- *Or, either/or, neither/nor*
- Relative pronouns as subjects
- Linking verbs
- Changing the order of subjects and verbs
- Collective, plural, and "false plural" nouns with verbs

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Aside from understanding verb tense, writers also must know how verbs agree with their subjects. Singular verbs should be paired with singular subjects and plural verbs with plural subjects. Although it might seem confusing, the *-s* ending on a present tense verb marks it as **singular**, whereas the same ending on a subject marks it as **plural**. Ordinarily we don't think much about this distinction but observe it naturally in speaking and writing, as in the following two examples:

The boy runs home after school.

The boys run home after school.

However, as we write more complicated sentences than these, we sometimes have trouble finding subjects and verbs and then making them agree in number. Chapter 5 will help you with subject/verb agreement problems.

Intervening Words

One common trouble spot in sentences occurs when dealing with a verb separated from its subject by a number of words—as in this sentence. We often try to connect the verb with the closest noun (in this case, *sentences*) instead of the actual subject (*one*). Here are several example sentences with the subjects underlined once and the verbs twice:

1. Cashew wine, the national wine of Belize, is fermented from the cashew fruit.
2. Kevin Bacon, famous for the party game linking him with other actors, has appeared in more than fifty films.
3. Lasers, which were thought of as sci-fi technology only 50 years ago, now can be bought for a few dollars in hardware stores throughout the nation.
4. A chance to listen to and perhaps see wild red wolves awaits people visiting the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, in North Carolina.
5. Nancy Pelosi, along with many Democrats and some Republicans, stated in January 2007 that it was "time to drain the swamp" of dirty-money politics.

To find the subject, first look at the verb, and ask who or what is doing the action (for an action verb) or is the focus (of a being verb). For example, in sentence 1, what is fermented? *Cashew wine* is. In sentence 2, who has appeared? *Kevin Bacon* has. You might also notice that in sentence 2 there are several **prepositional phrases** (word groups starting with a preposition and ending with a noun or pronoun). As we learned in Chapter 3, subjects are *never* found within prepositional phrases; therefore, when you see these phrases, you can mentally (or on paper, as in the following examples) cross them out to help you find the real subject.

For sentence 2: Kevin Bacon, famous ~~for the party game linking him with other actors~~, has appeared ~~in more than fifty films~~.

For sentence 5: Nancy Pelosi, ~~along with many Democrats and some Republicans~~, stated ~~in January 2007~~ that it was "time to drain the swamp" ~~of dirty-money politics~~.

Also note that sentence 5 uses the phrase *along with,* one of a small group of phrases that do not affect the number of the subject. These phrases include *in addition to, as well as, along with, plus, including,* and *together with.*



For more on subjects with prepositional phrases, see pp. 45–46.

For Activity 5.1, use the list of prepositions that follows.

PREPOSITIONS

Location			Other Uses	
above	behind	off	about	in addition to
across	below	on	according to	in place of
after	beneath	onto	as	in spite of
against	beside	out (out of)	aside from	instead of
ahead of	between	outside	as well as	like
along	beyond	over	because of	of
amid	by	past	by way of	regarding
among	down	through	despite	since
around	from	toward	due to	till
at	in	under	during	until
atop	inside	up	except (except for)	with
before	into	upon	for	without

ACTIVITY 5.1 *Making Sure Separated Subjects and Verbs Agree*

Underline the correct verb in parentheses twice and the subject once. Remember that subjects in sentences are never found within prepositional phrases.

EXAMPLE: Researchers at the University of Saskatchewan, in Manitoba, (has/have) found skunks to be timid creatures that try not to spray people.

1. The blue whale, like so many of its cousins, (travel/travels) in groups called pods.
2. My mother, one of Paul McCartney's many fans, (listen/listens) to *Memory Almost Full* at least twice a day.
3. Dog, of *Bounty Hunter* fame, together with his crew, (begin/begins) another season of catching the bad guys.
4. Many of the liveliest Peewee soccer games I have seen in this city (feature/features) parents shouting from the sidelines and getting more exercise than their children.
5. The girls in the red jerseys (play/plays) for the home team.
6. A bag of freshly picked tomatoes (rest/rests) on Martha's kitchen table.
7. Jogging 30 minutes every other day, along with bicycling 50 miles a week, (make/makes) Danny feel he is ready to hike the length of the Colorado Trail.
8. *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, which stars the heavyweights John Wayne, Jimmy Stewart, and Lee Marvin, (is/are) one of my favorite westerns.

Verbals: Incomplete Verbs

Another potential problem in establishing agreement between subject and verb is finding the main verb in the first place. In Chapter 3 we noted that certain words can look like verbs but are not (see pp. 40 and 45). These words, listed below, are called **verbals,** and while they have a sense of action or being, they are not complete verbs; therefore, they can never be the main verb in a sentence.

Because verbals are used so much in writing, they often cause agreement problems when writers mistake them for main verbs. In Chapter 10 we will study verbal phrases, but for now we will focus just on these incomplete verbs:



Learn to distinguish between *–ed* and *–ing* verb forms.

TYPES OF VERBALS

1. **Participles:** *-ing* or *-ed* form of a regular verb, *-ing* also for irregular verbs and often *-n* or *-t* (used as an adjective)
2. **Gerunds:** *-ing* form of a verb (used as a noun)
3. **Infinitives:** *to* + verb (used as an adjective, adverb, or noun)

Participles

Participles, as we have seen earlier in this unit, come in present and past tense. The present tense form for both regular and irregular verbs always ends in *-ing* (laugh*ing*, play*ing*, fly*ing*) and describes a noun (running *athletes*) or pronoun (*them* [the athletes] running). The past participle for regular verbs ends in *-ed* and for irregular verbs often ends in *-n* or *-t*. Participles function as **adjectives.** Notice in the following sentences how we might use participles:

PRESENT PARTICIPLES

1. A *trumpeting* elephant is defending his territory.
2. *Laughing*, Sophia was telling her *boring* friend that he needed a more *exciting* life.

The word *trumpeting* in sentence 1 describes the subject, elephant; though it conveys action, it is not the main verb. The present progressive phrase *is defending* is the main verb with a helper. Sentence 2 begins with the present participle *laughing*, which describes the noun Sophia. Then it includes the participles *boring* and *exciting*, both of which describe the noun that follows them. The main verb (with helper) is the past progressive phrase *was telling*.

PAST PARTICIPLES

3. The *exhausted* marines were retreating slowly toward a *battered* Humvee.
4. *Dejected*, Arthur was shredding carefully *preserved* love letters and *faded* pictures of his high school sweetheart.

In sentence 3, the past participle *exhausted* describes the subject, marines, while the participle *battered* tells about the Humvee. The main verb (with a helper) is the past progressive phrase *were retreating*. Sentence 4 has three past participles—*dejected, preserved,* and *faded*—each in front of a noun that it describes. The main verb with its helper is the double-underlined past progressive phrase *was shredding*.

ACTIVITY 5.2 *Finding Participles Used as Describing Words*

The following sentences use both present and past participles as adjectives. The present participle plus a helper verb is used as a main verb phrase. Circle all participles used as adjectives, find and double-underline the main verb or verb phrase, and then underline the subject. *Note:* Several sentences have more than one participle used as an adjective.

EXAMPLE: Streamlined and visually appealing, the new Dell Inspiron is winning rave reviews.

1. The friendly, smiling gecko has made GEICO a lot of money.
2. Billy Ray Cyrus, the kind and understanding father of Hannah Montana on the Disney Channel, is playing at Kemper Arena this weekend.

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3. Finally identified, the virus was still leaving thousands of dying monkeys in its wake.
4. Many participating organizations are helping Denim Day become a successful fundraiser for breast cancer research.
5. Pawing at the earth, the enraged bull was threatening the coyote trotting past the field.
6. Runoff water flowing from the homes along Indian Creek was polluting the stream.
7. A hard-working veterinarian was saving the lives of many infected horses.
8. Noted anthropologists are documenting the fast-disappearing remnants of the Fremont culture.

Gerunds

Gerunds look a lot like present participles because they always end in *-ing*. However, gerunds do not describe words as participles do; instead, they *name* words. Gerunds may look like verbs, but they are **nouns**. They can be used as subjects, complements, or objects, as in the following example sentences:

1. **Gerund subject:** Swimming requires strength and confidence.
2. **Gerund subject complement:** In the summer Chris's favorite sport is *surfing*.
3. **Gerund object:** Many people fear *flying*.
4. **Gerund object:** Many people are afraid of *flying*.

Sentence 1 uses the gerund *swimming* as a subject. Number 2 uses the gerund *surfing* as a subject complement (a noun or pronoun tied to the subject with a linking verb). Sentences 3 and 4 use the gerund *flying* as an object (a noun or pronoun that receives the action of the main verb).

When trying to locate the main verb or verb phrase in a sentence, consider how each word functions. To decide if an *-ing* word is a gerund, try mentally replacing it in a sentence with the pronoun *it*. Note the following two sentences:

1. **Gerund:** *Dancing* has always been a part of Sha-Mena's life.
2. **Participle:** When Sha-Mena was young, her mother told her that she had "*dancing* feet."

We can mentally replace the word *dancing* in sentence 1 with *it*, but we can't do the same in sentence 2 ("it feet" makes no sense).

ACTIVITY 5.3 Finding Gerunds

In the following sentences circle the gerunds, double-underline the main verbs or verb phrases, and then underline the subjects. Remember that gerunds are often subjects, so you would both underline and circle those that are subjects. *Note:* Several sentences have more than one gerund.

EXAMPLE: Complaining will not solve the problem.

1. Surprising people with a practical joke can be funny or sometimes dangerous.
2. Carlos will be responsible for organizing the food and beverages.
3. At first Frodo and Sam looked forward to beginning the journey.
4. The blizzard stopped us from skiing to the A basin today.

3. Sam begged Clarissa to forgive him for forgetting her birthday.
4. To perform on *American Idol* has recently become Izzy's dream.
5. United Airlines offered to replace all of the lost luggage.
6. The United States promised to help Afghanistan become a stable and secure nation.
7. To manage his roofing business was becoming harder for Hector.
8. I tried to swim quietly past the fifteen turkey vultures feeding on the shore.

ACTIVITY 5.5 *Mixed Review: Finding Participles, Gerunds, and Infinitives*

The following sentences have participles, gerunds, and infinitives along with various main verb phrases, including the present and past progressive tenses (*is crying/was crying*). Underline all subjects, double-underline all main verbs or verb phrases, and circle all verbals, writing above them *P, G,* or *I* (for *participle, gerund,* or *infinitive*). *Note:* Several sentences contain more than one verbal.

EXAMPLE: The writers for *South Park* appeared to enjoy killing Kenny and then reviving him in the next episode.

1. The men admitted robbing the Quik Trip, but they hoped to escape a prison term.

2. Marianne agreed to the divorce to move her life in a better direction.

3. Mr. Stouffer can't help worrying about declining enrollment at Trailwood.

4. To volunteer for stream cleanup was a difficult commitment for many in the group.

5. Passing a car just before a hill can cause people to brake quickly,

   to swerve, and to crash their vehicles.

6. Kelsey was anxious to test her new backpacking gear.

7. Designed for comfort, the Loon 138, a kayak, has a long cockpit,

   making it easy to get in the boat and to store gear.

8. Marilyn is often too busy to meet her friends for dancing in the city.

Compound Subjects

Subject/verb agreement errors sometimes occur when we use a **compound subject** (a subject with two or more parts). Most often compound subjects are plural, as you can see in the following examples:

Both local residents and visitors to New York City often cannot tell where they are when they get off at a subway stop.

City officials, residents, and visitors all think that placing large directional decals on sidewalks outside subway stops could help to orient people.

However, some singular subjects may appear to be compound, as in the following example:

The coach and counselor Hank Stafford devoted his life to his team.

ACTIVITY 5.6 *Finding Compound Subjects*

In the following sentences double-underline the main verb, and then underline the compound subjects.

EXAMPLE: Staph and other secondary infections are becoming more dangerous as people arriving at hospitals with minor ailments contract killing infections.

1. Al Gore and the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have received the Nobel Peace Prize for their work raising public awareness about global warming.
2. The community center and the homeless shelter are open 24/7.
3. Al Saunders, NFL offensive coach, often uses the screen pass play—and Washington and Kansas City have won crucial games because of the coach's strategy.
4. In the backyard, cardinals, blue jays, and mourning doves are swarming the feeder.
5. Airbeds and memory foam mattresses can reduce back pain.
6. Shale and composite shingles, clay tile, and slate are all choices for roofing a house.
7. The trainer made this clear: together, diet and exercise can best help you control weight.
8. For surviving cooler temperatures in home ponds, pickerelweed, thalia, myotis, and lizard's tail are good choices.

Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite pronouns, which do not specify a specific person or thing, sometimes cause agreement errors. Though it may seem odd to use a word like *everyone* as singular, traditional practice treats it that way. Verbs linked to the following indefinite pronouns should also be singular:

SINGULAR INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

anybody	each	everyone	no one	somebody
anyone	either	neither	nothing	someone
anything	everybody	nobody	one	something

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5. Nat enjoys sleeping late on Sunday.
6. Danielle hates filling out her tax forms but loves getting the money back.
7. Many students stop studying when they are tired, unless working the extra hours is crucial.
8. Learning the basics well early in life makes the rest of education much easier.

Infinitives

Infinities, the final and most flexible type of verbal, can serve a number of functions within a sentence. Like gerunds, they can serve as nouns (subjects, complements, or objects); like participles, they can act as adjectives; and, finally, they can function as modifiers for adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. If this seems like a lot for one class of word, it is! However, infinitives are fairly easy to recognize because they begin with the word *to* (though sometimes *to* is implied), followed by the base or dictionary form of the verb (*run, love, travel*). Note the following examples:

1. **Noun:** To try is all anyone can ask.
2. **Adjective:** For novices, those are the right horses to ride.
3. **Adverb:** At first, some trails seem easy to hike.

Sentence 1 uses the infinitive as a noun and as the subject. Since *to ride* describes *horses*, a noun, in sentence 2, the infinitive is an adjective. In sentence 3 *to hike* describes the word *easy*, an adjective modifying the noun *trails*. Therefore *to hike* is working as an adverb. For our purposes now, it is less important for you to know the noun/adjective/adverb function of infinitives than it is for you not to mistake them for main verbs.

Here are two important points to remember about identifying infinitives:

1. Writers often drop the *to* before a pair or series of infinitives (to cut unneeded words), but the *to* is understood to be there, so the word is still an infinitive. In the example sentences below, the infinitives are italicized and the "understood" *tos* are in parentheses:

   My friends and I were too big *to fit* in the car and (*to*) *do* the jump ourselves.

   So we decided *to put* my sister in the car, (*to*) *strap* her inside, and (*to*) *put* a pillow in for padding.

2. The word *to* before a base verb is an infinitive (*to* sleep). But the *to* that links nouns and pronouns to sentences creates prepositional phrases (*to* the store, *to* the party, etc.)

English Review Note

Learn which verbs can be followed by gerunds, which by infinitives, and which by both without changing meaning. Example: How is *I stopped to smoke* different from *I stopped smoking*?

HINT

For more on prepositional phrases, see pp. 142–143.

ACTIVITY 5.4 Finding Infinitives

In the following sentences circle the infinitives, find and double-underline the main verbs or verb phrases, and then underline the subjects. Remember that infinitives can be nouns (subjects, complements, or objects), adjectives, or adverbs. If the infinitive is a subject, underline *and* circle it. *Note:* Several sentences have more than one infinitive.

EXAMPLE: Peter Jackson decided not to include the character of Glorfindel in his *Lord of the Rings* films.

1. Jose intended to finish his composition paper, but his friend wanted him to go to a party instead.
2. That hockey player cannot afford to spend any more time in the penalty box.

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In these example sentences, the singular pronouns are underlined and the singular verbs double-underlined.

Anything missing is in the lost-and-found box.

Everyone feels some stress around finals.

Each of the actors hopes that she will get the part.

When a singular indefinite pronoun is linked to a subject that has two or more parts, the sentence uses a singular verb, as in the following example:

Every moth and butterfly in the field seems to be in the air at once.

Here are several indefinite pronouns that are plural: *both, few, many, others,* and *several*.

At the meeting both of the competitors want to be heard.

Indefinite pronouns like *all, more, most, any, none,* and *some* can be singular or plural, depending on the meaning of the sentence:

Singular: All of her day is devoted to work.

Plural: All of the brownies have mysteriously disappeared over the course of the day.

ACTIVITY 5.7 *Making Sure Indefinite Pronouns Agree*

In the following sentences double-underline the correct verb and underline the correct indefinite pronoun subject.

EXAMPLE: Someone (is/are) sure to be left behind if we don't hurry.

1. None of the people we met at the party (is/are) going to the concert.
2. Each of the climbers (was/were) finding a path up the sheer cliff face.
3. Although the storm is near, neither of the fishing boats (has/have) pulled in its nets.
4. Most of the cyclists (feels/feel) too tired to ride another mile.
5. Everyone running in the marathon (wants/want) to finish with a good time.
6. Every effort and resource available (needs/need) to be marshaled to combat the genocide in Darfur.
7. Nothing that any one country can do (is/are) enough to stop global warming.
8. All of the children on the playground (runs/run) nonstop during recess.

Or, Either/Or, Neither/Nor

To keep compound subjects in agreement with verbs when using *or, either/or,* and *neither/nor*, we have three possibilities for subject/verb agreement:

1. When the subjects are both singular, the verb is singular.

   Either a plasma *or* an LCD TV is a good choice.

2. When the subjects are both plural, the verb is plural.

   Football games *or* basketball games are his favorite entertainment.

3. When the subjects are singular and plural, the verb agrees with the closest subject.

   Neither the minister *nor* the members of his congregation want to erode the separation of church and state.

   Note: While it is grammatically correct to write a sentence with the singular subject closest to the verb, it often sounds awkward, as it does in the example below, and so should be avoided.

   AWKWARD: *Neither* the members of his congregation *nor* the minister wants to erode the separation of church and state.

ACTIVITY 5.8 *Choosing Singular or Plural Verbs with Compound Subjects*

In the following sentences double-underline the correct verb, and underline the part or whole of the paired subjects with which the verb must agree.

EXAMPLE: Either Mark or his cousins (is/are) driving to Lawrence this evening.

1. Neither going to the movies nor dining out (seems/seem) like a good idea tonight.
2. Salvador and Raphael (is/are) picking us up after school.
3. Halloween or Thanksgiving (falls/fall) on the 31st of October.
4. The Defenders of Wildlife and the Nature Conservancy (has/have) recently helped establish more lynx habitat.
5. Neither the police officer nor the firefighters (was/were) able to open the car door.
6. Guatemala or Honduras (has/have) the best-preserved Mayan ruins.
7. The Chicago Bears and the Cubs (has/have) extremely dedicated fans.
8. Either Daimler/Chrysler's tiny Smart Car or some other super-small European imports (was/were) supposed to be at the car show.

Relative Pronouns as Subjects

We learned in Chapter 3 that pronouns must refer back to nouns (or other pronouns) to have an identity. The same is true for the **relative pronouns** *who, which*, and *that* (among others), which are the subjects of relative clauses, as you can see in the sentence examples below. These pronouns are singular or plural based on the noun they refer to. (For more on relative clauses, see pp. 159–161.)

1. A **politician** *who* has integrity is careful about where his or her money comes from.
2. **Politicians** *who* have integrity are careful about where their money comes from.
3. A **bear** *that* bothers people is generally relocated or killed.
4. **Bears** *that* bother people are generally relocated or killed.

Sentences 1 and 2 use the *who* pronoun to refer to *politician*—singular in 1, plural in 2. Notice that the verb *have* changes to agree with the singular and plural nouns. This pattern holds for sentences 3 and 4 as well.

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Here are two phrases that often make relative pronoun agreement confusing: *one of* and *the only one of*.

5. The lion is one of the big **cats** *that* are found in Africa.
6. The lion is the only **one** of the big cats *that* lives in groups called prides.

The relative pronoun *that* in sentence 5 refers to *cats*, which is plural, so the verb *are* must be plural too. In sentence 6 *that* refers to *one*, which is singular, so the verb *lives* must also be singular.

ACTIVITY 5.9 *Identifying Relative Pronouns as Subjects*

In the following sentences underline the relative pronoun, draw an arrow to show which noun it refers to, and then double-underline the correct verb form.

EXAMPLE: Jack Sparrow, who (is/are) a captain in *Pirates of the Caribbean*, spends much of his time staggering around his ship.

1. Keith is one of the teachers who (refuses/refuse) to teach from "yellowed" notes.
2. The weather for the last three nights—which (has/have) been unusual—has been freezing.
3. Dogs that bark too often (is/are) an awful nuisance.
4. Carter will give the money to those people who (needs/need) it the most.
5. Ascension is waving to a man who (looks/look) like her uncle.
6. Hayao Miyazaki is the only one of the directors who (has/have) been called the "father of Japanese animated cinema."
7. The fish in my aquarium, which (is/are) well fed, sometimes leap out of the water at me.
8. Rachel always shops in grocery stores that (sells/sell) organic food.

Linking Verbs

As we learned in Chapter 3, **linking verbs** (like forms of *to be*) describe a state of being, a quality, or an important characteristic of the subject they describe. In essence they act as an equal sign between the subject and the complement (a word that describes the subject), as in this sentence:

That golden retriever is huge.
retriever = huge

Linking verbs should always agree with their subjects, even when it might sometimes seem that the verb should agree with a complement. Besides *to be*, other common linking verbs are *act, appear, become, feel, get, grow, look, remain, seem, smell, sound*, and *taste*. Notice in the sentences below how the verb changes from singular in the first example to plural in the second as the plural complement *accidents* becomes the subject in sentence 2.

1. The difficulty is accidents plaguing the team.
2. Accidents are the difficulty plaguing the team.

If a sentence like number 1 seems awkward, you can always revise it, as in sentence 2.

ACTIVITY 5.10 *Identifying Linking Verbs*

In the following sentences double-underline the correct form of the linking verb and underline the subject.

EXAMPLE: The arrival of several guests (is/are) the start of the evening's festivities.

1. The river valleys of south-central Missouri almost (seem/seems) like true wilderness.
2. Another common use of trash bags to solve backpacking problems (is/are) as pack covers.
3. The barrier reef in warm Belizean coastal waters (is/are) a snorkeler's dream.
4. The possibility (remains/remain) for heavy thunderstorms and tornadoes.
5. Alex thinks that his favorite variety of roses (smells/smell) like cherry popsicles.
6. The mistakes of the town council (is/are) our focus for tonight.
7. Carrie's only option left among many (looks/look) like moving out and getting a job.
8. The story of Nat's Halloween pranks (appears/appear) to be long in the telling.

Changing the Order of Subjects and Verbs

Remember that the most common word order in English sentences is subject, verb, object:

S V O
Ethan broke the window.

However, writers sometimes change this order for variety, emphasis, and clarity. When we change these standard word locations, especially by reversing subject and verb, we sometimes have trouble with subject/verb agreement. The next section discusses four common ways that writers shift sentence parts.

Inversion

Inversion moves the subject of a clause close to or all the way to the end of the clause, emphasizing the final words. Compare sentence 1, in standard order, with sentence 2, which is inverted.

1. The bathroom door flew open, and two frightened children rushed in.
2. The bathroom door flew open, and in rushed two frightened children.

In the second part of sentence 1, notice that the subject, *children*, comes before the verb, *rushed*. Sentence 2 reverses the subject/verb order to emphasize how frightened the children were.

ACTIVITY 5.11 *Finding Subjects and Verbs in Inverted Sentences*

In the following sentences underline every inverted subject once and every inverted verb twice.

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EXAMPLE: As the mouse scurried frantically for cover, out of the sky with talons extended dropped a hungry eagle.

1. At the other end of the spectrum is the authoritarian parent.
2. As I was racing down the hill, suddenly, out of nowhere, came a tin shed!
3. At the back of the arena is a dirt trail that leads down a steep hill.
4. Next is the food, so bring plenty of snacks.
5. Traveling with the Jedi heroes is young Queen Amidala.
6. At the top of poll after sports poll stood a single figure—Muhammad Ali.
7. Most notably affected are the liver and the nervous system.
8. Through the night came a cry for help.

There/Here



Occasionally starting a sentence with *there*, *is/are*, or *here* can help with variety, but be careful not to overuse these words.

Writers sometimes begin sentences with the words *there is, there are*, or *here*. These constructions push the subject past the verb, so agreement can become a problem. Notice where the subjects are located in the following sentences:

1. There are thirty people coming to the party later.
2. There is a van in the driveway.
3. Here are the keys for the house.

If the subject and verb are unclear to you in sentences like these, you can mentally rearrange them, putting the subject back into its front position, as in the following examples:

1. Thirty people are coming to the party later.
2. A van is in the driveway.
3. The keys for the house are here.



The words *here* and *there* announce the subject, so look ahead for correct agreement.

ACTIVITY 5.12 *Locating Subjects and Verbs with* There Is/Are *and* Here

In the following sentences underline the subjects and double-underline the verbs.

EXAMPLE: There is widening income inequality in the United States, with great wealth becoming concentrated in the hands of a few.

1. There are good reasons for choosing this college.
2. Here are the maps for the Water Dog Lakes trail.
3. There is a college in Texas with no MySpace access on campus.
4. Here is the DVD with John Prine's greatest hits.
5. There are many peregrine falcons dining on pigeons in big cities.
6. There is a way to reach Seattle avoiding the interstate.
7. Here are the notes from today's lecture.
8. There is a reasonable likelihood of snow today.

Questions

Questions can also cause subject/verb agreement problems. When we ask questions, the subject and verb usually change positions, as in the following examples:

1. Are you canceling our dinner date?
2. Why are those people staring at us?
3. How is that frozen yogurt?
4. Where is the key to the car?

In sentences 1 and 2 the subject has moved between two verb parts; in sentences 3 and 4 the linking verb *is* simply precedes the subject. It will often help you spot the verb and subject if you rewrite the question as a statement, as we might do with sentence 1: You are canceling our dinner date.

Note: Questions can also appear in regular word order, as when a statement is spoken as a question: You are going on a date with *him*?

ACTIVITY 5.13 *Locating Subjects and Verbs in Questions*

In the following sentences, underline every subject and double-underline every verb or verb phrase.

EXAMPLE: When will some smokers stop throwing their cigarette butts out of their car windows?

1. Why are you leaving your coat behind?
2. How are we supposed to find your house?
3. Do you know how to read a topographic map?
4. Where is the island of Roatan?
5. Will the trash truck pick up that many bags of leaves?
6. When does the earliest flight arrive from Houston?
7. Is Peter Jackson ever going to make a movie of *The Hobbit*?
8. Are any insurance companies willing to lower rates for teen drivers?

English Review Note

Use *do/does* to form a question in the present.

Passive Voice

Passive voice is a way of constructing a sentence so as to downplay or eliminate the active agent, the real subject. This is done by shifting the subject and direct object, adding a preposition and a form of the verb *to be* (*am/is, are, was/were*) as a helper to a past participle, and often by eliminating the subject altogether. Compare sentence 1, in **active voice**, to 2, in passive voice:



1. Jose threw the ball.



2. The ball was thrown (by Jose).

Sentence 1 clearly has the intended subject, Jose, throwing the ball, the direct object. However, sentence 2 shifts the direct object to the subject position, making the ball the grammatical subject and moving Jose, the actor in the sentence, to the object slot. Often the active subject is removed from the sentence altogether. If passive-voice sentences seem confusing when you are trying to find a subject, first ask who or what is really the actor. Next, ask who or what is receiving the action.

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When the doer of an action is relatively unimportant or unknown, the passive voice can be an effective choice. However, active voice works best when—as in most cases—you want the real doer of the action to receive full attention. For instance, which of the next two sentences sounds best to you?

3. Climbing hills on her dirt bike is loved (by Katie).
4. Katie loves climbing hills on her dirt bike.

If you chose number 4, it's because active voice sounds best when readers expect the real subject of the sentence to be the actor.

However, there are times when passive voice is the better choice. Here are two sentences that use passive voice to emphasize the words placed in the subject position:

Patrick's new Toyota Tundra was totaled today.

This sentence focuses on the destruction of the new truck, rather than on who did it.

On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center was destroyed.

The writer of this sentence wants the reader to think about the tragedy, rather than the terrorists who caused it.

English Review Note

Be careful not to overuse the passive voice.

ACTIVITY 5.14 *Locating Subjects and Verbs in Passive-Voice Sentences*

In the following sentences underline every subject once and double-underline every verb or verb phrase. Next, decide which verbs are in the active and which are in the passive voice, and write *A* or *P* over each. Look for a form of the verb *to be* (*am, is/are, was/were*) before a past participle (*was broken*), and look for a word that should receive the action in the sentence instead of being used as the subject. The real subject of the sentence might be included in the object slot preceded by a "by" (as in, *by* Samantha).

A P
EXAMPLE: When they ran out of gas, the Johnsons were saved by AAA.

1. I see that the dirty dishes were left in the sink again.
2. Bears, wolves, and cougars are feared by coyotes.
3. Some unfair accusations were made during the meeting, but no one objected to them.
4. Jack's house was robbed last night, but Jack was not hurt.
5. Lauren was given her third speeding ticket this month.
6. I would be happy if the downstairs rooms were vacuumed.
7. Everyone was delighted by the fireworks display.
8. Dinner was prepared by someone with an expert touch.

ACTIVITY 5.15 *Locating Subjects and Verbs in Passive-Voice Sentences*

In the following paragraph underline every subject and double-underline every verb or verb phrase. Then write a *P* over every verb phrase that is in the passive voice. Look for a form of the verb to be (*am, is/are, was/were*)

before a past participle (*was broken*), and look for a word that should receive the action in the sentence instead being used as the subject.

> A stretch of the Rocky Mountains runs virtually unbroken for 250 miles from central Montana into southern Canada with a skyline that exalts all the land within eyeshot. Many call this the Crown of the Continent. Glacier National Park, connected to wildernesses on the south and in both Alberta and British Columbia on the north, is the centerpiece. Up to two miles high, Glacier's peaks embrace a million Montana acres and 762 lakes to reflect them in hues from milky turquoise strewn with ice flows to so diamond clear that you can see bottom stones 50 feet deep. One of the largest lakes has its head in Glacier and its azure body in a 125,000-acre sister reserve, Waterton Lakes National Park, just across the border in Alberta. The adjoining protected areas were proclaimed the world's first international peace park in 1932. Both were designated international biosphere reserves during the 1970s, and in 1995 Waterton-Glacier International IPeace Park was further distinguished as a World Heritage site. Although 95 percent of Glacier is managed as wilderness, more than 700 miles of interconnecting trails invite foot traffic into the farthest contours.
>
> —from "Crown of the Continent" by Douglas H. Chadwick



See Chapter 29 for more on effectively using persuasion.

ACTIVITY 5.16 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Using the Active and Passive Voice to Persuade***



Complete the following assignment in pairs. Choose one of the paragraph topics listed on pages 422–423 of Chapter 29, and find an issue that you largely agree on. Each of you will write a paragraph addressed to an audience of your peers, arguing for this viewpoint, but one of you will use entirely (or mostly) active voice; the other will use entirely (or mostly) passive voice. Compare paragraphs among larger groups, and discuss your findings.



Collective, Plural, and "False Plural" Nouns with Verbs



Some collective nouns may be plural in other languages.

Collective Nouns

American English usually views words that stand for groups as singular, for example: *army, audience, band, choir, class, committee, crowd, family, flock, gathering, group, herd, majority, minority, school, staff,* and *team*. Notice that the subjects (and verbs) in the following two sentences are singular:

1. Our team feels that the coach is wrong.
2. The army works new recruits hard in boot camp.

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However, if the members of the group are acting individually, it often sounds more natural to revise the sentence to reflect this, as, for example, in this modification of sentence 1 on the previous page:

Most of the players on the team feel that the coach is wrong, but some think he's right no matter what.

ACTIVITY 5.17 *Making Collective Nouns Agree with Verbs*

In the following sentences double-underline the correct form of the verb and underline the subject of the verb once.

EXAMPLE: A school of blue-fin tuna (brings/bring) tens of thousands of dollars to the boat that catches it.

1. The comedian is so awful that the crowd (shouts/shout) him off the stage.
2. Because they surface so close to ice floes in the Arctic, a pod of narwhales (becomes/become) a target for Eskimo hunters.
3. A herd of cattle generally (moves/move) slowly unless it is startled.
4. Every September a gathering of bluegrass bands (performs/perform) great music for five days in Winfield, Kansas.
5. Flying low over the river, a flock of mallards (is/are) looking for food.
6. The audience of parents, grandparents, and family friends (applauds/applaud) wildly during the grade school talent show.
7. Led Zeppelin, a classic rock band, (continues/continue) to attract young fans.
8. Making its feeling known, the class (complains/complain) about the weekend homework.

Plural Nouns/Plural Verbs

While nouns that are collectively singular can cause agreement problems, so can nouns that are always plural. The following is a short list of common words that require plural verbs: *binoculars, clothes, fireworks, glasses, pants, pliers, scissors, shorts,* and *slacks.* Note the sentence below for plural agreement:

My clothes are in the closet.

"False" Plural Nouns

Not all nouns that end in *-s* are plural, for example: *athletics, economics, mathematics, physics, statistics, measles, mumps, ethics, politics,* and *pediatrics*. Also, though titles may contain plural nouns—for example, *The Incredibles* or *The Ten Commandments*—they take singular verbs. Sums of money, distances, measurements, and time units may also look plural, but when they are being used as a unit, they too are grammatically singular.

1. Physics explains how much of the world works.
2. Two hundred minutes makes for a long movie.
3. Fifteen hundred dollars buys a good 42-inch plasma TV these days.

ACTIVITY 5.18 *Making Sure Plural Nouns and "False" Plurals Agree*

In the following sentences double-underline the correct form of the verb or verb phrase, and underline the subject of the verb.

EXAMPLE: Measles (is/are) a childhood disease that has been brought under control in the United States.

1. Prescription sunglasses (costs/cost) a lot but may be worth the money.
2. Politics sometimes (attracts/attract) people who want to help others but all too often (attracts/attract) people who primarily want to help themselves.
3. While trying to tighten a table leg, Camille saw that her pliers (was/were) too small for the job.
4. Many critics agree that *The Missouri Breaks* (is/are) a fine, if quirky, film.
5. Pediatrics (demands/demand) a great deal of patience and compassion from its practitioners.
6. Binoculars (is/are) a good way to begin exploring the moon.
7. Competitive athletics (teaches/teach) important life lessons.
8. Nylon shorts (dry/dries) quickly in the sun.

ACTIVITY 5.19 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Subject-Verb Agreement Review***

Take the Chapter 5 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



Chapter Summary

1. Singular verbs should be paired with singular subjects and plural verbs with plural subjects.
2. A verb may be separated from its subject by a number of intervening words.
3. Finding the main verb in a sentence is an important part of ensuring agreement; verbals (participles, gerunds, and infinitives) are not complete verbs and cannot function as the main verb.
4. Using a compound subject can sometimes cause confusion in subject/verb agreement. Remember that compound subjects are almost always plural.
5. Some indefinite pronouns are singular, others plural, and others can be used in singular or plural constructions, depending on the nouns they refer to (use p. 81 as a guide). A relative pronoun is singular or plural depending on the noun it refers to.
6. Linking verbs should always agree with their subjects, even when it might sometimes seem that the verb should agree with a complement.
7. The most common way to arrange an English sentence is subject-verb-object, but sentence parts can be reordered for variety, emphasis, or clarity.
8. Most collective nouns, which name groups, are treated as singular and should therefore be used with singular verbs.

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Nouns

6

[*"What is that weird thing?" the young man shouts, pointing at the metallic object rising from the ground. In a hushed tone the young woman whispers, "an alien spaceship. We're doomed!" When we hear the word "spaceship," we have some idea of what is frightening the couple. Nouns like* spaceship *are valuable because they name things. Look closely at this photograph, and list every noun you see.*]



KEY TOPICS

- What a noun looks like
- Kinds of nouns
- Functions of nouns
- Problem nouns
- Gerunds
- Infinitives

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

As we learned in Chapter 3, **nouns** name things. They are vital to our writing because they focus verbs. Without nouns (or pronouns standing in their place), sentences would have no subjects to say something about; a noun is the someone or something that acts or is acted upon. Learning to recognize nouns and their functions in sentences will give you more confidence as you write. You will be better able to determine sentence boundaries and avoid errors that make good ideas difficult to understand.

What a Noun Looks Like

Nouns name things, yes, but more specifically, they name people (*Condoleezza Rice, boy*), objects (*computer, glass*), animals (*hummingbird, Lassie*), places (*San Antonio, home*), emotional states (*love, sadness*), qualities (*loyalty, stubbornness*), and concepts (*global warming, heaven*). Most of us are comfortable thinking of nouns as people, places, things, and animals; but emotions, qualities, and concepts may seem a bit trickier. For example, can you identify and underline the nouns in this sentence? (The verb is double-underlined.)

> Hate is a self-destructive emotional state that throws off people's balance and may destroy their happiness.

Knowing what you do about verbs from Chapters 3, 4, and 5, you can spot *hate* as the subject of the linking verb *is*. It's likely, also, that you easily recognize *people* as a noun. However, the other nouns in the sentence—*state, balance,* and *happiness*—are less obvious.

To pick out the nouns in a sentence, use this three-point test to ask the following questions of each word:

1. Can I put an article (*a, an, the*) or a word like *my, this, some,* or *one* in front of the word?
2. Can I make the word plural?
3. Can the word show possession?



Use this test to identify nouns.

In the preceding sentence about hate, we can put the word *state* to the test. First, we notice that it has the article *a* in the sentence, and we can say *a state* or *one state*. We can also make the word plural, saying *states*. Trying the third test, we can show possession by saying *this emotional state's self-destructive force*. The word *state* meets all three tests and so must be a noun.

Another noun test that can help is noting suffixes (word endings) that often indicate nouns (but may sometimes also mark verbs). Here are a few of these word endings: *–tion, -sion, -age, -ment, -al, -ant, -er, -ist, -ism, -ty, -ance, -ture, -dom, -ship, -ness*. Note how these suffixes might be attached to nouns:

NOUN-MARKING SUFFIXES

atten*tion*	occup*ant*	govern*ance*
fus*ion*	rent*er*	depar*ture*
leak*age*	environmental*ist*	king*dom*
require*ment*	extrem*ism*	friend*ship*
arriv*al*	commun*ity*	happi*ness*

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English Review Note

Study this distinction between *the* and *a/an* closely. Articles often pose challenges for nonnative speakers.

The article *the* refers to something specific or already known by the reader (*the* dog next door that woke us up), whereas *a* and *an* refer to a nonspecific noun or one not already known by the reader (*a* dog woke us up). Use *a* before nouns that begin with a consonant sound (*a* book) and *an* before nouns that start with a vowel sound (*an* apple).

Notice that the sound rather than the letter determines the choice of *a* or *an*: *a* used backpack (*u* sounds like *y*), *an* hour, *an* honor (both *hs* are silent).

ACTIVITY 6.1 *Finding Nouns with the Three-Point Test*

In the following sentences use the three-point test (p. 93) and the word endings listed in the chart on p. 93 to find the nouns, and then underline them. *Note:* Nouns sometimes describe other nouns, for example, *baby carriage, oven mitt, pastry chef, deck chair*, and others.

EXAMPLE: Emma was serving a detention after school for her part in the prank.

1. Both the buyer and the seller were pleased with the transaction.
2. Perfectionists spend much energy on tiny details.
3. Marci completed her homework assignment faster than the other students.
4. As the depth and pressure increased, the diver could not clear her ears.
5. After his heart attack, Lloyd decided to try vegetarianism.
6. Self-discipline is a trait that often leads to success.
7. After completion of the kitchen work, the contractor will begin on our living room.
8. Yuki showed leadership and courage that were appreciated by her team.

HINT

For more on specific vs. general language, see Chapters 21 and 33.

Kinds of Nouns

We can begin to classify nouns based on how relatively *general* and *abstract* or how *specific* and *concrete* they are. People, objects, animals, and places tend to be relatively specific and concrete, forming an image in our minds. This can make them easier to spot as nouns than concepts, qualities, and emotions, which tend to be more general and abstract. But there are other useful categories of nouns, which are listed below.

1. **Common nouns** name things that are not unique, and English has a huge number of these nouns. They can name people (*musician*), objects (*car*), animals (*dog*), places (*city*), concepts (*religion*), qualities (*courage*), or emotions (*love*).
2. **Proper nouns** name specific, unique things and are capitalized. They name people (*Jimi Hendrix*), objects (*Dodge Viper*), animals (*Benji*), places (*Colorado Springs*), and concepts (*Hinduism*).
3. **Count nouns** name things that can be quantified or enumerated and generally form their plurals by adding an *-s* or *-es*, as in the following examples:

   tree/trees book/books dress/dresses kiss/kisses

4. **Noncount nouns** name things that cannot be counted and have no plural form: *coffee, milk, rice, flour, bread, furniture, luggage, sugar, gravel, earth, water, coal, aluminum, rain, air, sunshine, gasoline, luck, courage, pride*. We can say, for example, "I like *coffee* in the morning" but not "I like *coffees* in the morning."

English Review Note

Some noncount nouns may be countable in other languages. In English, food and drink words (*flour, cake*), substances (*furniture, gravel*), and abstract nouns (*courage, pride*) are noncount.

To express a quantity of a noncount noun, add other words in front of it, like these examples:

two cups of coffee *20 gallons* of gasoline

5. **Collective nouns** name a group that is considered a unit and so is grammatically singular. Examples include *group, gathering, team, family, herd, crowd, faculty, staff, pod, committee, government, flock, audience, band, company, party, crew, fraternity, sorority, league, association, cluster, bunch,* and *gang*. Note that a collective noun agrees with a singular verb:

   The basketball *team* is playing well tonight.

6. **Compound nouns** are those made of two or more words that act as a single unit. Examples include *living room, heart attack, heat shield, office building, fruit juice, waste management, vacuum cleaner, electric car, toaster oven, noncount noun, brother-in-law, General Motors, Bureau of Land Management,* and *Food and Drug Administration*.

   Note that a compound noun (*Food and Drug Administration*) is a singular, collective unit, and so it requires a singular verb (*approves*).

   The Food and Drug Administration approves many new medicines each year.

As noted above, most nouns form their plurals by adding *-s* (cat/cats) or *-es* (dress/dresses). However, there are also nouns with irregular plural forms. Here is a brief list:



For more on collective nouns and subject-verb agreement, see Chapter 5.

COMMON IRREGULAR NOUN PLURALS

woman/women	man/men
child/children	mouse/mice
foot/feet	tooth/teeth
knife/knives	life/lives
hypothesis/hypotheses	criterion/criteria
fish/fish	sheep/sheep



For more on noun plurals, see pp. 90–91.

ACTIVITY 6.2 WORKING TOGETHER: *Recognizing Nouns*



In pairs or small groups, identify and underline the nouns in the following sentences. For help with this activity, review the six noun categories above.

EXAMPLE: Salida, Colorado, is in a beautiful river valley near Colorado Springs.

1. The Food and Drug Administration too often approves drugs that are dangerous to consumers.
2. It takes courage to overcome irrational fears like arachnophobia.
3. Conquerors of Mexico, the Aztecs built their capital city, Tenochtitlan, where Mexico City is now located and ruled the country for 300 years.
4. Reviewers have said that *Spiderman 3* is the darkest of the Spiderman series.
5. Our family gathering at Thanksgiving seemed like a herd of cows stampeding toward the dining room table.



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6. After mowing the yard, Seth had a glass of fruit juice and rested on his deck chair.
7. New York City requires all restaurants to list calorie information on their menus.
8. Sal said, "I judge a truck by these criteria: cost, performance, and reliability."

Functions of Nouns

Another way to determine if a word is a noun is by its function in the sentence: what does it do as it names? The following are various roles nouns can play:

- **Subjects:** Nouns can act.
- **Objects:** Nouns can receive action.
- **Complements:** Nouns can describe or rename subjects following linking verbs (such as *is*).
- **Appositives:** Nouns can describe or rename other nouns without linking verbs.

Subjects

Subjects are the doers of the action in a sentence or the focus of a linking verb. In the following example, what leaves the water? The hippos do, so they must be the subject.

Hippos leave the water at night to graze on land.

Objects

Objects receive the action of the verb: direct objects receive action directly, while indirect objects receive it indirectly. An object of a preposition is the last word in a prepositional phrase. We can see how each kind of object works in the following sentence:

Direct Object Indirect Object Object of Preposition
ANCSA gave much *land and money* to *Alaska Natives* in *1971*.

A **direct object** tells who or what receives the action of the verb. The subject in the preceding sentence, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, or ANCSA, gave what to Alaska Natives? The answer is *land and money*. These words receive the direct action of the verb, so they are the direct object.

An **indirect object** tells for whom or what the action of the verb is done. In the sentence above, ANCSA gave *land and money* (the direct object) to whom? The answer, or indirect object, is *Alaska Natives*. An action is passed through the direct object to the indirect object. Note that indirect objects often appear without the word *to* and can come between the verb and the direct object, as in the following sentence:

Indirect Object Direct Object Object of Preposition
ANCSA gave *Alaska Natives* much *land and money* in *1971*.

The **object of a preposition** is the final word in a prepositional phrase (common prepositions: *in, on, of, by, over, to, around*). In the sentence above, the phrase *in 1971* begins with the preposition *in* and ends with the number noun *1971. 1971* is the object of a preposition.

English Review Note

Word order may vary in other languages; review English rules for word types and placement.

Complements

A subject complement is a noun (or an adjective) that follows a linking verb (*is, was, were,* etc.). In the following sentence, we might consider the linking verb *is* to be an equal sign: *Jamie = English professor*, a subject complement.

Jamie is an *English professor*.

Appositives

Appositives are single words or phrases that rename or define a word that usually comes before them. The appositive noun works much like a synonym. In the following sentence, the word *radicals* is the appositive noun renaming the subject *ecoterrorists*.

Ecoterrorists, deluded *radicals*, burned many properties in Vail, Colorado, in 1998.

English Review Note

Some languages do not use linking verbs between subjects and complements; English does.

ACTIVITY 6.3 Practicing How Nouns Function

In the following sentences fill in the blanks in parentheses to identify the underlined nouns as subjects (*S*), direct objects (*DO*), indirect objects (*IO*), objects of prepositions (*OP*), complements (*C*), or appositives (*A*).

EXAMPLE: Fall (*S*) is gradually becoming less colorful in the Northeast (*OP*).

1. Angelina (_____) ordered a side cup (_____) of chopped jalapenos (_____) with her pizza (_____).
2. For fun, Brad climbed the 50-foot-tall elm tree (_____) in his backyard (_____).
3. Small cruise ships take passengers (_____) on weeklong trips (_____) on Florida rivers.
4. The matriarch, or ruling female (_____), of the pride (_____) gave a small portion (_____) of her kill to the hungry male (_____).
5. Global warming is melting the ice sheets (_____) of Greenland at an accelerating rate (_____).
6. Labor unions (_____) in the United States (_____) have helped workers (_____) rise out of poverty (_____).
7. Some car companies (_____) are now offering their customers (_____) 100,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranties (_____).
8. The Beach Boys' song "California Girls" (_____) was a huge hit (_____) in the sixties and is still popular with young people (_____) more than 40 years later.

Problem Nouns

Just as abstract nouns—like *beauty* or *intelligence*—can be hard to spot in a sentence, so too can nouns that are derived from verbs, such as *swimming* in the sentence *Swimming was her favorite sport*. In other sentences, *swimming* can be used as a verb, but in this context, it is the subject of a sentence, and the verb is *was*. We call these kinds of nouns verbals. There are two common verbal types: gerunds and infinitives.

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Gerunds

Gerunds are verb forms that always end in *-ing* and always function as nouns in sentences. Here are a few examples: *walking, skiing, running, riding, flying, drinking*. Because gerunds look like the progressive form of a verb (is/was *drinking*) and the present participle (*exciting* plans), they can be confusing. Also, as we learned earlier in this chapter, nouns can function in different ways in sentences (as subjects, complements, objects, and appositives), and so gerunds, as nouns, can appear in many places in a sentence. (For more on gerunds, see pp. 78–79.)

Here are a few types of gerunds:

Gerund subject: Flying requires patience these days because of airport security procedures.

Gerund complement: Rajiv's most relaxing pastime is *reading*.

Gerund object

- **Direct object:** His Labrador finally quit *begging* for table scraps.
- **Object of a preposition:** Cody is excited about *leaving* for his vacation.

Gerund appositive: Aerobic sports (*jogging, cycling, walking*, and others) are important to everyone's health.



Remember that *to* + a base verb makes an infinitive, but *to* + a noun (*the store*) or pronoun (*it*) makes a prepositional phrase (*to the store, to it*).

Infinitives

Infinitives are verb forms that usually begin with *to* (sometimes implied in infinitive pairs or series) before a base verb and function as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. In this section we will focus on them as nouns. Here are several examples: *to read, to think, to sleep, to lead*. As with gerunds, because infinitives can be nouns, they can appear in several places in a sentence. (For more on infinitives, see pp. 79–80.)

Here are two types of infinitives:

Infinitive subject: *To win* requires hard work and persistence.

Infinitive object: Ramon intends *to visit* his cousin today.

ACTIVITY 6.4 Spotting Verbal Nouns

In the following sentences underline all *gerunds* and *infinitives*. Watch out for the *–ing* used as a progressive verb tense (is/was *thinking*) and as a present participle (*floating* logs). Also, remember that *to* can signal a prepositional phrase rather than an infinitive.

EXAMPLE: Crying is not the way to solve this problem.

1. Lauren is interested in learning how to ice skate.
2. Crossing into Canada from the United States did not require a passport several years ago.
3. I avoided thinking about the frustrating problem all day.
4. It is beginning to snow, and the biting wind is blowing hard.
5. To reach the stage takes more effort than Erin is willing to spend.
6. Cooking is an exciting hobby to some and a boring labor to others.
7. One high school in this city is allowing students to avoid learning algebra.
8. Because she wants to work in a hospital, Brittany is considering getting her RN certification.

ACTIVITY 6.5 *Mixed Review: Finding Nouns*

Review what you have learned in this chapter, and then underline every noun in the following paragraph. Remember the three-point noun test, kinds and functions of nouns, and the tricky nouns—gerunds and infinitives. Watch out for the *-ing* used as a progressive verb tense (is/was *thinking*) and as a present participle (*floating* logs). Also, remember that *to* can signal a prepositional phrase rather than an infinitive.

LYN-Z ADAMS HAWKINS—SKATEBOARDER: 2004 X Games gold medalist

When she won her X Games medal at age fifteen, Lyn-Z Adams Hawkins climbed up on the podium, held up her skateboard with "Rip" inscribed on the deck, and said, "That was for my dad." It was a fitting tribute to the man who bought Adams her first skateboard, when she was a year old, and died seven months before she won the title. But the world's best female skateboarder has always been precocious—on and off the ramp. Last year, she threatened a walkout over the pay disparity between male and female riders (the male X Games champ got $50,000: Adams Hawkins took home just $2,000). Still, the former Girl Scout is paying a high price for her sport. Last year, Adams broke her arm and bashed her head pulling off a skating stunt for a photo shoot, then blew out her knee in a February crash. She lives with her family in Cardiff-by-the-Sea, California, but can't walk on the beach because it aggravates the tendonitis in her knees. So while she'll miss the X Games as she recovers from surgery, Adams Hawkins channels her drive into physical therapy, listening to Andre Nickatina on her iPod and waiting until she is healed enough to start pushing the envelope again.

—"Athletes on the Edge 06" by Allen St. John. *Rolling Stone*



For more on defining terms, see Chapter 28. For more on determining purpose and audience, see Chapter 1.

ACTIVITY 6.6 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Nouns to Help Define*



When we want to introduce a word or clarify how we are using it, we use synonyms or appositives to describe it to readers. Turn to the topics list on pages 416–417 of Chapter 28, and with a partner or small group, choose a word to define. Brainstorm together and come up with a list of synonyms or appositives you might use to define the term. Then, on your own, write a paragraph defining that word for an audience that might not be familiar with the term or how you are using it. Use at least two of the synonyms or appositives your group came up with, making sure to choose ones that are relevant for your purpose and audience.



ACTIVITY 6.7 WORKING ONLINE: *Nouns Review*



Take the Chapter 6 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



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Chapter Summary

1. Nouns name things: people, animals, objects, places, emotional states, qualities, and concepts. As we learned in Chapter 3, every sentence needs a subject (which is or includes a noun or nouns) and a verb.
2. You can use the three-point test (p. 93) and commonly used suffixes to help determine whether a word is a noun.
3. Common nouns name things that are not unique, so they are lowercased; proper nouns name specific, unique things and are capitalized.
4. Count nouns, which name things that can be quantified, have plural forms; noncount nouns, which have no specific quantity, do not.
5. Collective nouns name things grouped together as a unit and are grammatically singular.
6. Compound nouns are made up of one or more words that function as a single unit.
7. Nouns can function in a sentence as subjects, objects (direct or indirect), complements, or appositives. Each serves a different purpose.
8. Nouns derived from verbs are called verbals. The most common types are gerunds (which end in *-ing*) and infinitives (which usually begin with *to*).

Pronouns

7



[*So who just won the prize? She did. Who is "she"? Unless we have a noun to refer back to—in the picture above, Allison is the winner—we cannot know the person's identity. Write a brief paragraph that tells about a prize, game, or contest you have won. Referring to the pronoun chart on page 102, underline all the pronouns in your paragraph.*]

KEY TOPICS

- Referring to the antecedent
- Agreeing in number with the antecedent
- Choosing proper pronoun case
- Solving common problems with pronoun case
- Remaining consistent in person

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Like verbs and nouns, **pronouns** are a common and important part of speech. Pronouns like *it, this, who, myself,* and *everyone* stand in the place of nouns and help create variety in writing. You will probably recognize most of the pronouns in the categories listed below.

PRONOUN TYPES

Personal pronouns	I, you, he, she, it, we, they, me, her, him, them
Indefinite pronouns	all, any, anybody, anything, both, each, everybody, everyone, everything, few, many, more, most, much, nobody, none, no one, one, several, some, somebody, someone, something
Relative pronouns	who, which, that, what, whatever, whichever, whoever, whom, whomever, whose
Interrogative pronouns	what, who, which, whatever, whichever, whoever, whom, whomever, whose
Demonstrative pronouns	this, that, these, those
Reflexive and intensive pronouns	myself, yourself, herself, himself, itself, oneself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves
Reciprocal pronouns	each other, one another
Possessive pronouns	my, mine, your, yours, her, hers, his, its, our, ours, their, theirs



Memorizing *who, which,* and *that* will help you identify adjective clauses.

All of these pronouns have a place in our sentences, and if we were without them, we would end up with some fairly repetitive writing. Compare the following two paragraphs:

USES NOUNS ONLY (NO *PRONOUNS*)

1. Darlene stood at the bottom of El Capitan and gazed up the vertical cliff face. Darlene was looking forward to the climb, but Darlene was also nervous. The climb was Darlene's first solo venture. Darlene checked Darlene's climbing harness, rope, carabiners, hammer, chalk, and pitons. Darlene saw that Darlene's gear was ready. Darlene reached up for a handhold and began the climb.

USES A MIX OF *NOUNS* AND *PRONOUNS*

2. Darlene stood at the bottom of El Capitan and gazed up the vertical cliff face. *She* was looking forward to the climb, but *she* was also nervous. This climb was *her* first solo venture. Darlene checked *her* climbing harness, rope, carabiners, hammer, chalk, and pitons. *She* saw that *her* gear was ready. Darlene reached up for a handhold, and *she* began the climb.



For more on variety and coherence through pronouns, see Chapter 32.

Clearly, in paragraph 1, the repetition of *Darlene* becomes monotonous. To solve this problem, paragraph 2 uses pronouns.

As useful as pronouns are, however, they have a fundamental problem. Because they mean nothing by themselves, they must refer to a noun to have an identity. When someone says, "He was a real jerk," we ask, "Who was a jerk?" We cannot know until the person clarifies by saying, "Alex Meyers." Using a noun can tell the reader exactly what the writer means.

Whenever we use pronouns in our writing, we must be sure that the reader knows what we are referring back to, and we must be careful to use the correct pronoun form. Chapter 7 will help us explore both of these subjects.

Referring to the Antecedent

A pronoun refers to an **antecedent**, a word that the pronoun substitutes for—most often a noun, but occasionally another pronoun or phrase. The antecedent is usually located before the pronoun, either within the same sentence or within a nearby sentence, as for example in the following: Darlene succeeded in scaling El Capitan. *She* reached the top of *it* in three days. The words *she* and *it* take the place of *Darlene* and *El Capitan*.

The farther the pronoun is removed from its antecedent, the greater the chance for confusion. Consider the following sentences:

1. Fabio asked if Felipe would be taking *his* son to the soccer game on Saturday.
2. After checking *his* schedule, *he* told *him* that *he* could take *him*, but *he* would have to leave with *him* 30 minutes early.

Whose son may get to go to the game? Sentence 1 doesn't clarify who *his* refers to. Sentence 2 confuses things further with a string of pronouns that have no clear noun antecedents. To clarify meaning, we could recast the sentences this way:

3. Fabio asked if Felipe would be taking Fabio's son to the soccer game on Saturday.
4. After checking *his* schedule, Felipe told *him* that *he* could take Fabio's son, but Felipe would have to leave with the boy 30 minutes early.

Now we can see that Fabio is asking a favor of his friend and that Felipe will probably give Fabio's son a ride to the game.

Pronouns that can be particularly confusing to readers are *it, they, them, this, that, these, those,* and *which*. These words should usually refer to a specific noun rather than a general idea, and they should be close to the noun they stand for to avoid unclear meanings, as in the following three examples:

EXAMPLE 1

Draft: *It* made the girls unhappy that *they* bought up all the tickets for the concert.

What made the girls unhappy, and who bought all the tickets? Was it the girls or someone else? Perhaps ticket scalpers were the source of the girls' unhappiness. We can clarify by recasting the sentence with a clear noun antecedent:

Revised: The girls were unhappy because ticket scalpers had bought up all the concert tickets.

EXAMPLE 2

Draft: But *this* didn't trouble *them* at all because *they* knew there was always a good market for the right concert tickets.

What didn't trouble whom? Revising for clarity, we can clearly indicate what nouns these pronouns refer to.

Revised: The girls' unhappiness didn't trouble the ticket scalpers because they knew there was always a good market for the right concert tickets.

EXAMPLE 3

Draft: The real problem, as *they* saw *it*, was that *these* were allowed to purchase as many of *them* as *they* wanted, *which* kept *them* from buying *them* at a reasonable price.



Some languages do not require subject pronouns. Include them in your English writing.



Take care not to use both a noun and a pronoun to serve the same purpose.

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This third sentence begins with an unclear *they* reference and then goes from confusing to incomprehensible. None of the pronouns refer to a clear antecedent. The revision achieves clarity by replacing unclear pronouns with nouns and keeping several *pronouns* by linking them clearly to specific antecedents:

Revised: The real problem, the girls thought, was that *these* scalpers were allowed to purchase as many tickets as *they* wanted, a practice that kept the public from buying tickets at a reasonable price.

As we can see from the preceding examples, pronouns are useful in writing, but we must be careful to link them clearly with their antecedent.

ACTIVITY 7.1 *Recognizing Antecedents*

English Review Note

Remember that pronouns *he/his*, *she/her*, and *it/its* agree with their antecedents and not with the words they modify.

In the following sentences underline each pronoun and circle each antecedent. Next, write the pronoun/antecedent pair at the end of each sentence. Some sentences have several pronoun/antecedent pairs (or groups).

EXAMPLE: Benjamin Franklin thought so much of the wild turkey that he wanted it rather than the bald eagle as our national symbol. *Franklin/he,turkey/it*

1. Volunteer fire departments have saved their communities a great deal of money. _____
2. Eureka Springs is a friendly Ozark town that attracts many artists. _____
3. Dust mites are hard to eliminate because they are so tiny and plentiful. _____
4. When Katie arrived at school, she saw her sister, who was in the parking lot. _____
5. The members of the expedition rested their packs on boulders by the trailside. _____
6. These woods will be turning scarlet and gold soon. _____
7. Before submitting its plan, the company thoroughly researched its proposal. _____
8. Before Angelina attempted her triple axel, she smiled at the onlookers, who held their breath in anticipation. _____

ACTIVITY 7.2 *Clarifying Pronoun Reference*

In the space provided, revise the following sentences to correct unclear pronoun reference. You will often replace a pronoun with a noun and sometimes reword a sentence to make the reference clear.

EXAMPLE: To prevent squirrels from destroying your roses, set out live traps for them.

To prevent squirrels from destroying your roses, set out live traps for the rodents.

1. Crishanda saw a meadowlark on a fence post that was eating a grasshopper.

_____

2. We broke the speed limit getting home from the concert, but we still drove carefully, which is why we got a speeding ticket.

_____

_____

3. Max told his brother that he was going to regret staying up so late.

_____

4. If you can't get your daughter to remove the adhesive bandage from her own finger, just pull it off yourself.

_____

_____

5. After the cattle were rounded up by the cowboys, they were loaded onto boxcars and shipped off to market.

_____

_____

6. Many people in developing countries live in poverty because multinational corporations pressure their countries' governments to keep the minimum wage low.

_____

_____

7. To combat global warming, many people favor carbon credits. This problem requires intensive international cooperation.

_____

_____

8. Tommy watched a creepy old *X-files* episode and then drank some hot chocolate before bed, but it kept him awake half the night.

_____

_____

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Agreeing in Number with the Antecedent

Not only must pronouns be clearly linked to their antecedents, but they must also agree in **number:** singular nouns take *singular pronouns*; plural nouns take *plural pronouns.* Consider the following examples:

1. Margarine keeps forever, but *it* has little nutritional value.
2. Hydrogenated oils in the margarine keep it fresh, but *they* also contribute to heart disease.

Sentence 1 uses the singular pronoun *it* to refer to the singular noun *margarine*. Sentence 2 links two plurals, *they* with *hydrogenated oils.*

Most difficulties with pronoun/antecedent agreement fall into one of three categories: indefinite pronouns, collective nouns, and compound antecedents.

Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite pronouns as antecedents can be a problem because they do not refer to a specific person or thing. Although most are singular, a few are plural, and several (*all, any, enough, more, most, none, some*) can be either singular *or* plural, depending on what noun they connect with. Note the following list:

INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

Singular		Plural	Singular or Plural
anybody	nobody	both	all
anyone	no one	few	any
anything	nothing	many	enough
each	one	others	more
either	somebody	several	most
everybody	someone		none
everyone	something		some
neither			

Notice how we might use some indefinite pronouns in sentences:

1. *Everyone* on the staff contributes regularly.
2. *Someone* is holding a lit candle.
3. *Several* were happy to volunteer.

Sentences 1 and 2 use singular indefinite pronouns, while sentence 3 uses a plural pronoun. If the sentences above seem clear, here are several others that might be more puzzling:

4. *Each* of the teams hopes that it will make the playoffs.

INCORRECT *Each* of the teams hope that *they* will make the playoffs.

Sentence 4 uses the singular pronoun *each* as the subject, which requires a singular verb, *hopes*. And even though the noun *teams* is plural, the singular pronoun *it* refers back to *each*.

5. *Neither* of the *coaches* believes that *his* team can be beaten.

INCORRECT *Neither* of the *coaches* believe that their team can be beaten.

Sentence 5 uses the singular pronoun *neither* as its subject, requiring a singular verb, *believes*, and though the noun *coaches* is plural, the singular pronoun *his* refers back to *neither*.

Here are several more examples illustrating correct pronoun agreement:

6. *One* of the officers was trying to find *his* pen to write a ticket.
7. *Anyone* who knows about lightning will not pitch *his* or *her* tent under a lone tree.
8. After Hurricane Katrina, *many* insurance companies have failed to honor *their* policies in claims from New Orleans residents.

The pronoun *many* in sentence 8 is plural and requires another plural pronoun, *their*, to reference it.

9. *Some* water leaks out, and *it* forms a puddle on the bathroom floor every morning.

The pronoun *some* is singular in sentence 9 because it refers to water, which is a singular collective noun.

English Review Note

Sentence 7 uses the construction *his or her* to overcome gender bias in pronoun usage. (See Chapter 33.)

ACTIVITY 7.3 *Making Sure Indefinite Pronouns Agree*

Underline the antecedent in each of the following sentences, and then underline the appropriate indefinite pronoun in parentheses.

EXAMPLE: In the Flint Hills of Kansas, the ground shakes from a herd of buffalo with (their/its) thundering hooves.

1. Each of the chameleons found (their/its) place by the wall light and waited for unwary flying insects.
2. Because of the drought, almost everybody in Atlanta is worried about the shortage of water in (their/his or her) city.
3. Neither of the men could believe that (they/he) had found a 105-foot-long dinosaur.
4. Both of the NFL players thought (they/he) had gotten an unfair call.
5. Almost all of the ice cream had disappeared from (their/its) hiding place in the freezer.
6. Nobody at the accident thought that (they/he or she) was at fault.
7. Anybody who studies as much as the professor expects (them/him or her) to should do well in the course.
8. Any animal that lives in the abyss of the ocean catches (their/its) prey without the use of eyesight or creates (their/its) own light.

Collective Nouns

American English treats most groups of things, animals, and people as a single unit, that is, individuals acting together as one, for example: *jury, fraternity, sorority, league, association, club, company, board, party, crew, cluster, bunch, gang, army, fleet, committee, team, band, class, audience, crowd, gathering, group, herd, school, swarm, pod, pack,* and *flock*. Pronouns referring to singular collective nouns are also singular:

COLLECTIVE NOUN SINGULAR PRONOUN

The *jury* felt that *it* had served justice.

Our *bowling league* is open to *anyone* who can keep the ball out of the gutter.

However, if the members of the group are acting individually, the noun becomes plural and so does the pronoun, for example:

COLLECTIVE NOUN PLURAL PRONOUNS PLURAL PRONOUN

The *audience* lingered, *some* of *them* looking pleased and *some* just puzzled.

ACTIVITY 7.4 *Making Pronouns Agree with Collective Nouns*

Underline the antecedent in each of the following sentences, and then underline the appropriate indefinite pronoun in parentheses.

EXAMPLE: A pack of dogs can create much trouble if (they are /it is) not controlled.

1. The Cherry Hill Home Owners Association insists that (they have/it has) the right to keep fences in the development under 6 feet.
2. A flock of robins descended on Anastasia's backyard, and (they/it) dug dozens of small craters in her mulch beds.
3. The members of the fraternity Delta Sigma Phi say that (they expect/it expects) (their/its) pledge class to make a 3.0 minimum GPA.

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4. A large corporation usually serves the interests of (their/its) stockholders over any other consideration.
5. The clan came together to discuss (their/its) plans for dealing with the coal company.
6. A fleet of trawlers swept countless tons of shrimp into (their/its) nets until one day all the shrimp were gone.
7. So how *did* the fearless crew of the Minnow let (their/its) passengers get stranded on that island?
8. A pod of dolphins seemed to be constantly checking on (their/its) youngest members.

Compound Antecedents

Compound antecedents are nouns of two or more words joined as a unit with the conjunctions *and*, *or*, and *nor*. They are often used as subjects and as other parts of a sentence. When the antecedent is linked by *and*, it is usually plural, requiring a plural pronoun, as in the following examples:

COMPOUND ANTECEDENT
Mexico and the United States have been struck by massive flooding in recent

PLURAL PRONOUNS
years, and *these* countries are *both* still recovering from the disasters.

It is difficult to spot differences between a *house sparrow and a house finch* when *they* are at a distance.

However, be careful when dealing with several nouns used as a unit (compound nouns). These nouns are usually singular and so require a singular pronoun when referenced:

COMPOUND NOUN
The Food and Drug Administration annually approves many drugs as safe,

SINGULAR PRONOUN
but *it* sometimes lets dangerous ones on the market.

When the antecedent is linked by *or* or *nor*, if both parts are plural, use a plural pronoun to reference them. If both parts are singular, the pronoun referring to them should be singular. If one part of the antecedent is plural and the other singular, the pronoun should agree with the nearest part of the antecedent, as in the following examples:

1a. Plural: Neither *grizzlies nor mountain lions* usually view a human being as *their* natural prey.

1b. Singular: However, a *grizzly or* a *mountain lion* may attack people if *it* is provoked.

2a. Plural: Either the plant supervisor or the shift *workers* are responsible for the fire at *their* factory.

2b. Singular: Either the shift workers or the plant *supervisor* is responsible for the fire at *his* factory.

For smoother-sounding sentences, when using a plural and a singular compound antecedent as in sentence 2b above, put the plural word second, as in sentence 2a.



For more on compound subjects and agreement, see Chapters 5 and 6.

ACTIVITY 7.5 *Pronoun Agreement with Compound Antecedents*

Underline the antecedent in each of the following sentences, and then underline the appropriate pronoun in parentheses.

EXAMPLE: The dentist and doctor are vital for our health, but (he or she/they) can cause much anxiety and pain.

1. Neither the art teacher nor any of her students thought that (she/they) would have the projects completed on time.
2. Fernando likes Thanksgiving and Christmas because (it/they) offer lots of food and presents.
3. Either Sheila or the boys should clean up the living room mess if (she/they) want to go out for pizza tonight.
4. My aunts, sisters, and mother have decided that (she/they) know what's best for me.
5. Either the tackle shops or the Bass Pro store offers (its/their) lures at a reasonable price.
6. Maureen went to Six Flags St. Louis and Worlds of Fun this summer and loved (it/them).
7. Either hockey skates or figure skates can be a good choice if (its/their) blades are sharp.
8. Neither the other cable providers nor Crystal Vista was able to lower (its/their) price enough to be competitive.

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Choosing Proper Pronoun Case

Even after clarifying a pronoun's antecedent and checking for agreement in number, we can still have problems with **case,** one of the forms a pronoun takes to show how it works in a sentence: as subject, object, or possessor.

Subjective Case

Pronouns used as subjects or subject complements are in the **subjective case.**

Pronoun as subject: *We* went to see Radiohead in concert.

Pronoun as complement: The winner of the gold medal in freestyle competition is *she*.

Objective Case

Pronouns used as objects (receiving the action of verbs), objects of prepositional phrases (the pronoun at the end of the phrase), and subjects of infinitives (pronoun directly preceding the infinitive) are in the **objective case.**

Pronoun as direct object: Arthur saw *them* at the pool.

Who or what did Arthur see? He saw *them*. The pronoun *them* receives the action of the verb and so is a direct object and in the objective case.

Pronoun as indirect object: Eloise threw the book to *him*.

The book receives the action in this sentence, and so it is the direct object. However, the book is passed along to *him*; the action moves through the direct object to the indirect object. To identify indirect objects, ask to whom

or for whom the action is happening. Sometimes the *to* is only implied, as in the following example: She threw *him* the book. The pronoun *him* remains an indirect object and so is in the objective case.

Pronoun as object of preposition: Andy smiled at Eloise and *me*.

The pronoun *me* is the final word in a prepositional phrase. Pronouns and nouns in this position are always in the objective case.

Pronoun as subject of infinitive: Denice asked *her* to open the window.

In this sentence we ask who will open the window, and we see that it is the pronoun *her,* the subject of the infinitive. However, notice that the pronoun *her* also receives the action of the main verb, *asked.* It is the direct object of the sentence and so belongs in the objective case. (For more on subjects, objects, and complements, see pp. 96–97.)

Possessive Case

English Review Note

Remember that *its*, *whose*, and *your* are possessive pronouns; *it's*, *who's*, and *you're* are contractions.

Pronouns used to show ownership (as in the following examples) are in the **possessive case:**

Is that *your* coat? No, that one is not *mine*. *My* coat is the blue one.

The following chart will help you choose the correct pronoun case.

PRONOUN CASE CHART

	Subjective	Objective	Possessive
First-person singular	I	me	my, mine
Second-person singular	you	you	your, yours
Third-person singular	he, she, it, who, whoever	him, her, it, whom, whomever	his, her, hers, its, whose
First-person plural	we	us	our, ours
Second-person plural	you	you	your, yours
Third-person plural	they, who	them, whom	their, theirs, whose

ACTIVITY 7.6 *Choosing Pronoun Case*

In the following sentences fill in the blank with a pronoun in the correct case: subjective, objective, or possessive. Refer to the preceding pronoun case chart for help. Several pronouns may work in a given space.

EXAMPLE: The FedEx driver delivered a package to *me*.

1. Floating down an Ozark river in the summer is great fun for _____.
2. Nobody knew _____ jacket was left lying on the floor.
3. Ron's mother always loved _____ best.
4. The sergeant told _____ troopers that _____ would go on patrol in the morning.
5. Sharon hopes that _____ will be on time for once.
6. The bank gave _____ free checking for opening an account.
7. The Trek bicycle with the new derailleur is _____.
8. The flooding is not _____ problem because we live on high ground.

Solving Common Problems with Pronoun Case

Pronoun case often causes problems in three categories: compounds, comparisons, and *who/whom*.

Compounds

Compound (two-part) case difficulties occur when two pronouns, two nouns, or a noun and a pronoun are linked by *and* or *or*, as in the following examples:

Subjects: *Jenny and I/me* talked until 2 a.m.

Objects: The discussion was important to *her* and *I/me*.

Objects of preposition: It involved our long friendship, which has always been important to *her* and *I/me*.

In each of these sentences, confusion sometimes results from the pairings. However, if we mentally cross out one of the pair, the remaining word will often guide us to the correct case. For example:

~~Jenny and~~ I talked until 2 a.m.

It doesn't sound right to say "*Me* talked until 2 a.m." So "*Jenny* and *I* talked until 2 a.m." is correct.

The discussion was important to ~~*her* and~~ *me*.

Again, it doesn't sound right to say, "The discussion was important to *I*." So the correct answer is "The discussion was important to *her* and *me*."

It involved our long friendship, which has always been important to ~~*her* and~~ *me*.

Most of us wouldn't say "which has always been important to *I*." In these instances your ear can lead you to the right grammatical choice: "It involved our long friendship, which has always been important to *her* and *me*."

Being able to locate the verb and subject in your sentence will also help you determine case. By process of elimination, if the pronoun you are dealing with is not a subject or a subject complement and does not show possession, it is in the objective case.

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ACTIVITY 7.7 *Choosing Pronoun Case with Compounds*

In the following sentences underline the pronoun in the correct case: subjective, objective, or possessive.

EXAMPLE: Between you and (I/me), there is no way to win this game.

1. Salvador and (he/him) are going to medical school in the fall.
2. The clown offered Caitlyn and (I/me) a ball of pink cotton candy.
3. Is it true that (she/her) and Regina will be working backstage at the concert?
4. Garrett doesn't seem to care whether or not you and (I/me) go out tonight.
5. No one saw you and (I/me) entering the office.
6. You and (she/her) should start talking *to* rather than *at* one another.

7. There was too much confusion at the time to get the whole story from Fran and (they/them).

8. (They/Them) were embarrassed when the servers sang happy birthday to (they/them).

Comparisons

We often make noun/pronoun and pronoun/pronoun comparisons using the words *than* and *as*. These comparisons can be confusing because they may imply words left out of the sentence, as in the following examples:

Kyoko plays her electric bass more skillfully than *I/me*.

I am not yet quite as good as *she/her*.

If we add the implied verbs to sentences like these, it becomes easier to determine the correct pronoun case. With the verbs in place, we can see that the pronouns *I* and *she* are subjects and therefore must be in the subjective case:

Kyoko plays her electric bass more skillfully than *I* (*play*).

I am not yet quite as good as *she* (*is*).

Using this strategy of adding implied words, we can see that the pronouns *her* and *him* are the correct choices as direct objects in the following examples:

Michael always liked Jessie better than (he liked) *her/~~she~~*.

Polluted rivers distress Rosa as much as (polluted rivers distress) *him/~~he~~*.

Sometimes choosing pronoun case affects the meaning of your sentence, as in the following example:

Tyler focuses more on his studies than me. (than he focuses on *me*)

Tyler focuses more on his studies than I. (than *I* focus on my studies)

ACTIVITY 7.8 Choosing Pronoun Case with Comparisons

In the following sentences underline the correct pronoun in parentheses. Next, in the blank at the end of the sentence, write in the words that were left out of the comparison.

EXAMPLE: David can't bench-press as much weight as (he/him) *can bench-press*.

1. My friends from Tucson come to visit me more often than (he/him) _____.
2. The letter from the IRS spelled as much trouble for me as (her/she) _____.
3. Even though Casey and his wife are both a little crazy, we think she needs more help than (he/him) _____.
4. Even after their divorce, few people seem as genuinely miserable as (she/her) _____.
5. Of my brothers the oldest can go without sleep longer than the rest of (they/them) _____.
6. After Christopher Columbus met the Arawak Indians of Hispaniola, it can be said that few people have been as responsible for the genocide of a culture as (he/him) _____.

7. By the middle of the performance, it was clear that Arlis was more excited by the group than (she/her) _____.
8. Some of the soldiers had their tour of duty extended, but others were more fortunate than (they/them) _____.

Who/Whom

The relative pronouns *who/whoever* and *whom/whomever* can also cause case problems. *Who/whoever* are used as subjects and *whom/whomever* have traditionally been used as objects. The case for these pronouns depends on how they are used in the clause in which they appear, rather than on how that clause is used in the sentence, for example:

Object: Kristi was ***whom*** **the court ordered to appear on Friday.**

Although the pronoun *whom* is a subject complement (Kristi = *whom*) and would ordinarily be in the subjective case, within the bolded clause, *whom* is the direct object and so must be in the objective case.

Subject: The kickoff goes to ***whoever*** **wins the toss.**

Although the pronoun *whoever* is the object of the preposition *to*, in the bolded clause, *whoever* is the subject and so must be in the subjective case.

Subject: *Who* will pick up the kids from school today?

The verb phrase is *will pick up* and the subject is *who,* so the relative pronoun must be in the subjective case.

Object: You owe your success to *whom*?
To whom do you owe your success?
Whom do you owe your success to?

In these versions of the same question *owe* is the main verb with *you* as the subject and *whom* as the indirect object, so *whom* must be in the objective case.

The *who/whom* distinction becomes much simpler to deal with if you can recognize clause subjects. In most cases when *who* is the correct choice, it is followed directly by a verb. If the relative pronoun is followed directly by a noun or pronoun, *whom* is usually the correct choice.

Although the distinction between *who* and *whom* has been fading—*who* is often used in place of *whom*—you will signal a note of formality when you observe the difference. If the objective use of *whom* seems awkward or contrary to the tone of your work, you can always recast the sentence so that the relative pronoun is unneeded or sometimes just drop it, as in the following example:

The person ~~whom~~ Peter Parker admired most was his Uncle Ben.

ACTIVITY 7.9 Choosing Pronoun Case with Who/Whom

In the main clauses of the following sentences, underline the verb or verb phrase twice and the subject once. Next, circle the correct form of *who/whom*. If a verb immediately follows the relative pronoun, the pronoun is usually a subject and therefore should be *who* or *whoever.*

EXAMPLE: (Whoever /Whomever) gets to the family room first gets the best seat.

1. (Who /Whom) will meet us at the movies?
2. We will begin our business letter with this greeting: To (who/whom) it may concern.

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3. Pervez Musharraf was the leader (who/whom) suspended his country's constitution and censored the media.
4. Musharraf was also a leader (who/whom) all agree had encouraged the growth of a free media.
5. (Who/Whom) did you go with to the skating party?
6. The glory belongs to (whoever/whomever) finishes the marathon.
7. People should be able to work for (whoever/whomever) they want to.
8. A boss (who/whom) Dan respects is working the late shift tonight.

Remaining Consistent in Person

As we noticed in the Pronoun Case Chart (pp. 110), pronouns have *number* (singular or plural) and *person* (first, second, or third). **Person** is the perspective the author assumes when he or she writes: first person *(I, we)*, second person *(you)*, and third person *(he, she,* or *they)*. Writers should be consistent in both number and person.



Use *you* only when there is a good reason to address your reader directly.

The most frequent shift error is from the first person, *I*, or third person, *they*, to the second person, *you*, as in the following examples. Note how the writer corrects these mistakes.

EXAMPLE 1

I loved being out of doors when *I* was young. After a long, cold winter, when April finally came around, ~~you~~ I could see the daffodils and tulips pushing up out of the ground. And ~~you~~ I could see the grass turning green again and the leaves slowly budding out. *I* waited every spring for the robins to return from their hiding places in the woods, swooping down on unwary earthworms.

EXAMPLE 2

People who are bitten by a dog *they* don't know often bring the attack on themselves. *They* may try to take a dog's toy away or reach through a fence to pet the dog. Or ~~you~~ they might ignore signs of aggression like flattened ears, stiff tail, bristling fur, or bared teeth. People should approach unknown dogs with caution.

Writers often mix person in their work, but there should always be a good reason for doing so. The *I* of personal experience is sometimes used in introductions and conclusions but then avoided in the body paragraphs of an essay (except in a personal anecdote). To address the reader directly, we can use *you*, as we do occasionally in introductions and conclusions and often in process-analysis instructions (as in textbooks like this one). *We*, *us*, and *our* are useful pronouns for connecting with an audience, especially in persuasive writing. However, you should control shifts in person, especially avoiding the examples shown previously.

When using the slightly more formal third person, we have several options for avoiding an inappropriate second-person "you." We can use third-person pronouns *(he, she, they)* or nouns that stand in their place (*people, students, employees*—whatever noun describes the subject), or we can leave the pronoun out altogether. In the following example, note three possible fixes for the pronoun shift:

INAPPROPRIATE PRONOUN SHIFT: The colonists who fought under George Washington endured many hardships and suffered many losses. *You* were lucky if *you* survived *your* first winter.

1. **Fixed (pronoun: third person):** The colonists who fought under George Washington endured many hardships and suffered many losses. *They* were lucky if *they* survived *their* first winter.

2. **Fixed (noun):** The colonists who fought under George Washington endured many hardships and suffered many losses. These *patriots* were lucky if they survived their first winter.

3. **Fixed (pronoun deleted):** The colonists who fought under George Washington endured many hardships, suffered many losses, and were lucky to survive the first winter.

ACTIVITY 7.10 *Avoiding Shifts in Person*

In the following paragraph cross out incorrect pronouns and write the appropriate ones and other word substitutions in the space above the line.

EXAMPLE: If children begin doing housework at an early age, ~~you~~ they will be learning to live on ~~your~~ their own.

Earning an allowance has many benefits for young children. Having to work for your money makes you proud of your accomplishments. It helps them realize that they can contribute in a real way to the household. You can see that you are needed in the home. Although a child might not have to have the money, you might even do the work because it makes you feel good. The pride that children feel in cleaning a family room well or doing the dishes may even encourage you to do more housework. If you earn your allowance, you are working gradually toward independence from your parents.

ACTIVITY 7.11 *Mixed Review: Using Pronouns with Care*

Edit the following paragraph for the pronoun problems we have practiced in this chapter: reference, agreement, case, and shift. Cross out incorrect pronouns, and write the appropriate ones and other word substitutions in the space above the line. The first error is fixed as an example.

Uncle Tom's Cabin, written by Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1852, is a book that changed the way people of the United States and people of the world thought of slavery. ~~They~~ U.S. citizens didn't realize how badly a slave was treated in their own country. It dramatizes the suffering of them through the hardships of

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Uncle Tom, Eliza, and Eliza's family. The evil of slave owners is summarized in the vicious slave trader Simon Legree (whom has become a metaphor for a cruel taskmaster), whom beats Uncle Tom to death. To prevent her only surviving child from being sold, Eliza flees with her baby in the dead of winter across it. She is trying to escape to the free state of Ohio by scrambling from one ice flow to another across the freezing Ohio River. She was surprised at her success. Having written these as an anti-slavery tract in reaction to the second Fugitive Slave Act, you could not have anticipated the impact their work would have. Within the first year they sold 300,000 copies. Not long after, she saw them reach international sales of 1.5 million copies. She became the most famous woman author of her time. To many abolitionists, she was a hero, but to slaveholders, they were villains, whom was trying to destroy their way of life. Through the suffering of Eliza and Uncle Tom, she was able to rouse a sleeping nation to their national disgrace. They became more vocal in their opposition to slavery. This contributed to the growing antislavery sentiment that in turn helped fuel the Civil War.



ACTIVITY 7.12 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Pronouns in Process Analysis Writing*

When you explain to readers how to undertake or understand a process, you will use pronouns frequently to avoid repetition. Turn to pages 372–373 and choose a writing topic from the list. Draft a paragraph-long process explanation; then exchange work with a classmate. Underline all of the pronouns in his or her paragraph, noting in the margins what nouns they represent. Then go through the paragraphs together, checking to see if you have both used pronouns correctly. Feel free to use this chapter to check your work. Consult Chapter 25 for more on process analysis.



ACTIVITY 7.13 WORKING ONLINE: *Pronouns in Context*

Write a paragraph describing any work of art on the Academy of Arts Foundation's website: http://academart.com/. How many pronouns did you use? Circle any that you worry might be used incorrectly, try to fix them yourself, and then ask someone—a peer, a writing center worker, or your instructor—for feedback. For more on descriptive writing, see Chapter 21.



ACTIVITY 7.14 WORKING ONLINE: *Pronoun Review*

Take the Chapter 7 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. Pronouns stand in the place of nouns and help create variety in our work.
2. Pronouns can be classified as one or more of the following types: personal, indefinite, relative, interrogative, demonstrative, reflexive and intensive, reciprocal, and possessive.
3. Pronouns must be clearly linked to their antecedents, and they must agree with them in number.
4. Most difficulties with pronoun/antecedent agreement fall into one of these categories: indefinite pronouns, collective nouns, or compound antecedents.
5. Pronouns can be in the subjective, objective, or possessive cases.
6. Pronoun case often causes problems in three categories: compounds, comparisons, and *who/whom*.
7. One common pronoun error is shifting (without reason) from the first-person *I* or third-person *they* to the second-person *you*.

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Adjectives and Adverbs

8



[*In a paragraph, describe the scene shown here, using specific, vivid details, especially noting the colors. (See Chapter 21 for more on description.) After reviewing adjectives and adverbs, return to your paragraph. How many of each did you use? If you were going to revise, would you use more or fewer of each? Why?*]

KEY TOPICS

- Adjectives
- Adverbs
- Comparatives and superlatives
- Irregular adjective and adverb forms
- Overuse of modifiers
- Dangling and misplaced modifiers

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Writers often add information to sentences by using adjectives and adverbs, words that *describe* or *modify*. **Adjectives** tell about *nouns* and *pronouns* (*yellow* mums, they were *yellow*). **Adverbs** tell about *verbs*, *adjectives*, and other *adverbs* (walks *gracefully*, *very* small dog, *not too* sleepy). Although we usually locate these modifiers close to the word they describe, adverbs in particular may be some distance from the words they modify.

The problems we generally have with adjectives and adverbs are choosing the right ones, using them selectively, and attaching them clearly to the words they intend to describe.

Adjectives

Adjectives describe nouns and pronouns, telling *how many; which;* or *what kind*, color, shape, size, texture, or age the person or thing is. Many adjectives have endings like *-ish (foolish), -less (fearless), -able (agreeable), -al (traditional),* and *-y (pretty)*. Adjectives are usually located in front of the word they describe, but they may follow it, and they may be more than one word. Note the following examples:

ADJECTIVES LOCATED DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE WORD THEY DESCRIBE

These two tell number and size.

In our pond lives *one large* **snapping turtle.**

ADJECTIVES CONNECTED TO A SUBJECT BY A LINKING VERB

These adjectives (telling color and texture) are connected to *it* by the **linking verb** *is.*

It is *green* and *mossy*.

COMPOUND ADJECTIVES

These two tell color as a unit and so are hyphenated as a **compound adjective.**

It has *yellow-brown* **markings** on the edges of its shell.

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN

This adjective tells which one. Other **demonstrative pronouns** used as adjectives: *these, those*.

This **turtle** is wary.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUN

This adjective tells which one. Other **possessive pronouns** used as adjectives: *your, his, her, its, our, their, whose.*

My **dog** frightened it this morning.

POSSESSIVE NOUN

This adjective tells which one.

The *turtle's* **leap** from a rock was spectacular.

INDEFINITE PRONOUN

This adjective tells how many. Other **indefinite pronouns** used as adjectives: *several, both, many, few, others, all, some, each, everyone, none, nobody, either, neither, someone, anyone, anything.*

Some **children** at the pond applauded.

Participles and Infinitives

Adjectives can also be **participles** (regular: *-ing* or *-ed* form of a verb [*floating* feather, *tired* cabdriver] and irregular: *broken* window) or **infinitives** (*to* + a base verb: *to rent*).



In English, adjectives do not change form to agree with the words they describe or modify.



Other **linking verbs** include *feel, appear, seem, act, smell, sound, taste, look, become, get, grow,* and *remain.*

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Each of these participles tells what kind:

Present participle: The *floating* feather drifted into my lap.

Past participle: A *tired* cabdriver stopped for me.

Irregular past participle: He looked through a *broken* window.

This infinitive tells which one:

The landlady had one last apartment *to rent*.

English Review Note

The *–ed* form is used for a person undergoing an experience, while the *–ing* form is used for a person who is causing experiences or feelings.

Nouns as Adjectives

Nouns are often used as adjectives to describe other nouns:

desk drawer *laundry* hamper *fruit* juice

In the following sentence, the noun *laundry* tells what kind of hamper and so is used as an adjective:

Margot found the *laundry* hamper in the closet.

ACTIVITY 8.1 *Recognizing Adjectives*

In the following sentences underline all the adjectives (including nouns and pronouns used as adjectives). Remember to ask *how many; which*; or *what kind*, color, shape, size, texture, or age the person or thing is.

EXAMPLE: This morning Katie went for a 4-mile run.

1. Increasing numbers of Americans are becoming active in environmental protection.
2. Nobody thought a couch potato like Shaun could run 6 miles.
3. Bill Ross always constructs well-built homes at affordable prices.
4. The East's forests are disappearing as private landowners develop their property.
5. Is your friend working on Friday night again?
6. Some people still prefer film cameras.
7. A neglected indoor dog can cause many problems.
8. City highways are filled with speeding, distracted drivers, their coffee in their laps and their cell phones glued to their ears.

English Review Note

In English, adjectives usually come before the words they describe or modify.

Single-word and compound adjectives are common in sentences, but so are several phrases and a clause that function as adjectives.

Adjective Phrases

To review, prepositional phrases always begin with a preposition, often a short word that tells location (*in, on, at, by, under*). Participial phrases begin with a participle, either present, ending in *-ing* (sleep*ing* on the couch) or past, ending in *-ed* for regular verbs (excit*ed* by the idea). Infinitive phrases begin with the word *to* + a base verb (*to sleep* until noon).

In the following sentences, the underlined phrases all tell about the noun *person*, and so the phrases function as adjectives:

Prepositional: Hannah was the first person *at* the fair.

Participial: Hannah was the first person *arriving* at the fair.

Infinitive: Hannah was the first person *to arrive* at the fair.

Adjective Clause

Adjective clauses have a verb and a subject and usually begin with one of three relative pronouns, *who, which,* or *that* (*who* saw the accident). The relative pronoun is the subject in these clauses. The following example illustrates an adjective clause, which also works as an adjective, giving information about a noun:

Hannah was the first person *who* arrived at the fair.



Do not repeat the subject in the clause. Here, *who* replaces the subject.

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ACTIVITY 8.2 Recognizing Adjective Phrases and the Adjective Clause

In the following sentences underline all the adjective phrases (prepositional, participial, and infinitive) and the adjective clause. Often you will find prepositional phrases inside other phrases and clauses—see the infinitive phrase in the example below—but be sure to include the participle or the infinitive when they begin the phrase. Some sentences have several phrases and clauses.

EXAMPLE: Eileen wrote down the recipes to add to her cookbook.

1. Those are the trees for the city to mark for removal.
2. Smiling in anticipation, Mark took a bite of his cherry pie.
3. We have the notes to study for the history exam.
4. Going too fast for the road conditions, Rhonda lost control of the car, sliding into a ditch.
5. The beagle puppy playing in the mud is mine.
6. Matthew, who usually has all the answers, this time was stumped.
7. Jody drinks a mild tea that does not keep her awake at night.
8. Here are some suggestions to help with your insomnia.



For more on phrases and clauses, see Chapters 10 and 11.

Adverbs

Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs, telling *when, where, why, how,* and *to what degree* or *extent* something was done. Adverbs, like adjectives, can be single words, phrases, or clauses.

Many adverbs are formed by adding *-ly* to the end of an adjective, so one way to identify adverbs is to look for this *-ly* ending:

bad ⟹ bad*ly* happy ⟹ happi*ly* sweet ⟹ sweet*ly*

This method of identifying adverbs is not foolproof, however, because many adverbs do not have the *-ly* ending, as in the following list:

ADVERBS THAT DO NOT END IN *-LY*

already	awhile	now	quite	there
almost	forever	not	soon	too
always	here	often	then	very

English Review Note

Be careful not to confuse *then* (an adverb) with *than* (a word used to form a comparison).

Knowing how a word *functions* is the best way to determine what part of speech it is. Notice below how an adverb can function:

1. **Modifying a verb** (tells how): Jessie Littleriver *patiently* addressed the crowd.
2. **Modifying an adjective** (tells to what degree): She was *quite* determined to tell the whole story.
3. **Modifying an adverb** (tells to what degree): Jessie *very* patiently endured another interruption.

Because adverbs are the most maneuverable of the modifiers, you may find them before or after the word they describe and sometimes separated by many words from the word they tell about. We could rewrite sentence 1: "Jessie Littleriver addressed the crowd *patiently*."

ACTIVITY 8.3 *Recognizing Adverbs*

Underline the adverbs in the following sentences. Remember that not all adverbs have an *-ly* ending.

EXAMPLE: The lightning flashed across the sky, instantly disappearing.

1. After her mother started singing, Roxanne left the party quickly.
2. Too many people dispose of batteries carelessly.
3. "Already," thought Cody, "the stupid alarm is buzzing."
4. Kevin Bacon thought all the quiz show questions were easily answered.
5. The late fall chill in the Midwest always kills the mosquitoes.
6. Mary Jane climbed to her apartment slowly.
7. Isha creatively explained why her assignment was not ready.
8. With finals almost, but not quite, here, we should rest awhile and then work hard until the semester is finally over.

Adverb Phrases and Clauses

Besides single words, prepositional and infinitive phrases (discussed previously with adjectives) and the adverb clause can serve as adverbs in sentences. Adverb clauses have a subject and a verb and begin with a subordinating conjunction (*after, although, as, because, if, since, so that, when, where, while* and others; see pp. 161–162). Like single adverbs, the phrases and clauses answer the questions *when, where, why, how,* and *to what degree* or *extent* something was done.

The following sentences use two types of **adverb phrases,** prepositional and infinitive, to tell *why* the people left. Both phrases (underlined in these examples) describe the main verb *left* and so are being used as adverbs:

1. **Prepositional phrase:** We left for the park *on* time.

2. **Infinitive phrase:** We left for the park early *to arrive* there on time.

The underlined **adverb clause** in the following sentence functions as an adverb, telling *why* the people left:

3. **Adverb clause:** We left for the park early *because* we wanted to arrive there on time.

Word groups used as adverbs can often be shifted in sentences to help with clarity and sentence variety. For example, we could rewrite the preceding sentence 2 this way:

To arrive there on time, we left for the park early.

When you shift these word groups to the front of a sentence, be sure to set them off with a comma.



For more on punctuating phrases and clauses, see Chapters 15 and 16.

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ACTIVITY 8.4 *Recognizing Adverb Phrases and the Adverb Clause*

In the following sentences underline all the adverb phrases (prepositional and infinitive) and the adverb clause. Often you will find prepositional phrases inside other phrases and clauses, but be sure also to underline the infinitive at the front of the phrase. Some sentences have several phrases and clauses. Remember to ask *when, where, why, how,* and *to what degree*.

EXAMPLE: Harry washes his car to keep it from rusting.

1. To finish the project, Steven needed more money.
2. Although Ray was not religious, he liked visiting cathedrals to admire the stained glass and to appreciate the sculpture.
3. Henry shopped at a thrift store to find good buys on cookware.
4. Video games have come a long way since the days of Pacman and Pong, but people still enjoy playing these classics.
5. The Venus flytrap must capture insects to survive in poor soil.
6. Hosham left home an hour early to escape from the neighborhood gang.
7. To test airport security, the Federal Aviation Administration has tried sneaking "bomb" parts past baggage screeners—and succeeded about half the time.
8. Because Victoria, British Columbia, is an island city, to visit it, you must ride a ferry or fly.

Comparative and Superlative Forms

Adjectives and adverbs often compare two or more things. Those that compare two things use an *-er* ending or the words *more* and *less,* forms known as **comparatives.** Those that compare three or more things use *-est* or *most* and *least,* forms called **superlatives.** Here are some examples:



In English, the comparative is formed using one word unless the adjective has multiple syllables and doesn't end in *y*. Avoid incorrect constructions like *more big* or *more bigger*.

	ADJECTIVE	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
1.	big	bigger	biggest
2.	friendly	friendlier	friendliest
3.	careful	more (less) careful	most (least) careful
4.	intelligent	more (less) intelligent	most (least) intelligent

Antioch Park is *bigger* than Roe Park, but Central Park is the *biggest* of all. My beagle is *less intelligent* than my terrier, but my cat is the *least intelligent* of the three.

	ADVERB	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
5.	soon	sooner	soonest
6.	patiently	more (less) patiently	most (least) patiently
7.	creatively	more (less) creatively	most (least) creatively

The *sooner* we go the better, but the *soonest* we can leave is 6 o'clock.

Tony waited *less patiently* than his mother, but his youngest sister waited *least patiently* of all.



For more on spelling with word endings, see Chapter 17.

Notice that both adjectives and adverbs of only one syllable (as in numbers 1 and 5 above) usually use *-er* and *-est* to form their comparatives and superlatives. Also note that some adjectives that end in *y*, as in number 2 above, change the *y* to *i* before adding the *-er* and *-est* endings. However, most adjectives and adverbs of two or more syllables form their comparatives and superlatives by using *more* (*less*) and *most* (*least*), as in examples 3, 4, 6, and 7.

ACTIVITY 8.5 *Choosing Comparative and Superlative Forms*

In the following sentences fill in the blanks with the correct comparative or superlative form of the adjective or adverb in parentheses. Remember to use *more/most* or *less/least* for modifiers of more than one syllable.

EXAMPLE: Sami runs (fast) *faster* than anyone on the team.

1. Because we were in front of the stage, the band was (loud) _____ than the last time we were here.
2. George solved the algebraic equation (creatively) _____ than most.
3. We are hoping that this week will be (cool) _____ than last.
4. Eileen is (sad) _____ today than she has ever been.
5. The track team worked out (vigorously) _____ than the football team.
6. The (soon) _____ we can get home is by dinner time.
7. Elisa's mother said, "You should be (careful) _____, Elisa. You will get in trouble because you are the (careful) _____ of all your friends."
8. Looking at his 5 percent tip, Enrique said (gratefully) _____ than he usually did, "Thank you for coming to dinner tonight."

Irregular Adjective and Adverb Forms

Other adjectives and adverbs that can cause problems are the irregular ones, which do not follow the standard pattern of comparative and superlative forms. These forms have to be memorized. Here are the most common comparatives and superlatives:

ADJECTIVE	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
1. good	better	best
2. well	better	best
3. bad	worse	worst
4. little (amount)	less	least
5. many	more	most
6. far	farther, further	farthest, furthest

ADVERB	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
7. well	better	best
8. badly	worse	worst

The words *good, well,* and *bad* can be a special problem because we use them so frequently, and their forms overlap. If you test these words for their function in a sentence, you will find them easier to use correctly. The word *good* is always an adjective, whereas *well* is often an adverb but sometimes an adjective. As an adverb, *well* means "properly" or "skillfully." As an adjective, *well* generally means "healthy." Note the following examples:

GOOD

Adjective: Ginny has a *good* cat.

WELL

Adverb (describes the verb *behaves*): Ginny's cat behaves *well*.

Adjective (connects to the noun *cat* through the linking verb *seem*): Ginny's cat does not seem *well*.

The word *bad* can also be confusing. Keep in mind that *bad* is always an adjective and can only describe nouns. To describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs, use the adverb *badly* instead. Note the following examples:

BAD

Adjective (describes the noun *day*): Paul was having a *bad* day.

Adjective (connects to the noun *Paul* through the linking verb *looked*): His friends even said that Paul looked *bad*.

BADLY

Adverb (describes the verb phrase *was going*): It seemed as if everything was going *badly* for him.

ACTIVITY 8.6 *Choosing Irregular Comparative and Superlative Forms*

In the following sentences underline the correct comparative or superlative form of the irregular adjectives or adverbs in parentheses.

EXAMPLE: Because he partied too hard last night, Aaron was feeling (bad/badly), but by noon he felt (good/well) enough to get out of bed.

1. Al could see that the car was (bad/badly) damaged and that (worse/worst) trouble was ahead.
2. It was (good/well) to know that (better/best) planning would keep Frank's credit card debt from rising (further/furthest).

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3. Diana claimed that she wrote (good/well) and (more/most) often than other students who only *thought* they were (good/well) writers.
4. As (more/most) people realize that global warming is humanity's (more/most) pressing problem, (less/little) fossil fuel will be used until people cut back to the (less/least) amount possible.
5. France did (bad/badly) on the first leg of the Tour de France, but the team hoped they would do (better/best) on the next leg.
6. After coming off the mountain, we could see that Leo was in the (worse/worst) shape of all the climbers.
7. The (farther/farthest) south you go in South America, the closer you get to Antarctica.
8. Madeline could (well/better) believe that the (better/best) of the two plans was to keep Jason in bed until he felt (good/well).

Overuse of Modifiers

As helpful as adjectives and adverbs can be in explaining and building images, writers sometimes overuse them. A few common culprits are adverbs like the following: *very, really, extremely, awfully*, and *incredibly*. Occasionally it is appropriate to use these intensifiers, but more often than not they should be cut and the words they describe replaced with more specific words to achieve clarity, emphasis, and economy. For example, compare the following sentences:

Draft: The day was *really very* cold, and my toes were *extremely* frozen, and my fingers hurt *awfully* bad because the temperature was so *incredibly* low.

Revision: It was minus 20 degrees, so my fingers and toes were frozen, and I was miserable.

If you think that this revised sentence has more force, then try to avoid most of the mushy intensifying adverbs of its draft version.

It is also not uncommon in first drafts to cram too many modifiers into one sentence, often simply stacking them in front of a word. For example, compare the following sentences:

Draft: A huge, smelly, dim-witted, violent neighborhood bully always dressed in a beat-up black leather jacket, Spud was feared by all the kids on my block.

Revision: Spud, the neighborhood bully, was huge, dim-witted, and smelly. When we saw that beat-up black leather jacket that he always wore, all the kids on my block scattered.

Here, the draft sentence tries to stack too many adjectives in front of the noun *Spud*. The revision solves the problem by creating two sentences and redistributing the modifiers. Sometimes you will just cut modifiers, and other times you will weave them into your other sentences.

ACTIVITY 8.7 *Revising for Clarity and Economy*

Revise the following paragraph by crossing through excessive modifiers. The first sentence has been done as an example.

A Paid Vacation

Playing in the snow is always fun for ~~young school-aged~~ kids, but it's done a little differently in Brooklyn, especially when there is no school. First, we

would put on our warmest, driest, work snow clothes and then grab a long-handled, wide, curved snow shovel, planning on making a killing shoveling the cold, wet, deep snow. After maybe shoveling one narrow, icy, cement sidewalk, though, my pals and I would get bored, restless, and mischievous, and soon start pelting each other and innocent bystanders with big, round, wet, hard snowballs. My buddy Mike and I would often have to run for our lives after breaking a car window with one. Other nervous, excited, adventurous kids would "skitch" their way to safety, holding on to a metal or hard plastic bumper on the back of a moving car and sliding, slipping, and skating along the snow-covered, icy, cold, wet, dangerous street at 30 miles an hour. By late afternoon large, loud, warm, smoke-filled pizzerias would be packed with happy, tired, soaking wet kids from the neighborhood. Some of them would spend the hard-earned, easily-spent day's wages on fast-moving electronic video games, pizza, rice balls, sausage rolls, and giant spicy heroes. We would happily brag about the exciting, dangerous, challenging getaway and our paid holiday for the youth of Brooklyn.

Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers

Another problem with adjectives and adverbs can be clearly linking them to the word they should describe.

Dangling Modifiers

When a single modifier or a word group at the beginning of a sentence describes the wrong following word or no word at all, it is said to *dangle*. Here are several examples:

1. Sledding down the snow-covered hill, **my eyes** were watering from the cold.
   (incorrectly implies that "my eyes" were sledding)
2. Awakened at 6:00 a.m., **the sound of hammering** annoyed Luke.
   (incorrectly implies that "the sound of hammering" was awakened)
3. To like them, **the marshmallows** must be toasted a golden brown for Lauren.
   (incorrectly implies that "the marshmallows" are the ones with a preference)
4. As a dedicated mother, **her children** filled most of Tasha's life.
   (incorrectly implies that "her children" are a dedicated mother)

As you can see, the leading phrase in each sentence seems to describe the first noun that follows it, but this arrangement distorts the intended meaning. To correct the dangling modifier, you can either insert a subject into the leading phrase or place the intended noun directly after the phrase, at the beginning of the main clause, as in the following examples:

FIX BY ADDING SUBJECT:

1. As **I** was sledding down the snow-covered hill, my eyes were watering from the cold.
2. **Luke** was annoyed when he was awakened at 6:00 a.m. by the sound of hammering.



Participial phrases are especially prone to dangling. (See Chapter 10.)

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3. For **Lauren** to like them, the marshmallows must be toasted a golden brown.

4. Tasha is a dedicated mother whose children fill most of her life.

FIX BY MOVING SUBJECT:

1. Sledding down the snow-covered hill, **I** felt my eyes watering from the cold.

2. Awakened at 6:00 a.m., **Luke** was annoyed by the sound of hammering.

3. To like them, **Lauren** wanted the marshmallows toasted a golden brown.

4. As a dedicated mother, **Tasha** filled most of her life with her children.

Misplaced Modifiers

Misplaced modifiers also appear to modify an unintended word, creating confusion for the reader, as in the following examples:

1. Shellie sang a lullaby to her **daughter** in her nightgown.
   (confuses whose nightgown it is, Shellie's or her daughter's)

2. Gilberto's office was messy with books from the **libraries** stacked on every surface.
   (incorrectly implies that libraries are stacked on every surface)

3. Christian found a coin at a **flea market** that was 150 years old.
   (incorrectly implies that the flea market was 150 years old)

4. Carolyn enjoyed the **trampoline** bouncing 10 feet in the air.
   (incorrectly implies that the trampoline was bouncing in the air

5. The Buffalo River is usually fairly shallow and slow moving,
   but now it is in flood, which makes it safe for a family float.
   (means the opposite of what it intends, incorrectly implying that the river in flood makes it safe)

6. The dog only **barked** for an hour.
   (incorrectly implies that the dog did nothing but bark)

To correct the misplaced modifier, we move it closer to the word it should describe, sometimes adding a word or two. Note the following examples:

1. In her nightgown **Shellie** sang a lullaby to her daughter.

2. Gilberto's office was messy with library **books** stacked on every surface.

3. At a flea market Christian found a **coin** that was 150 years old.

4. Bouncing 10 feet in the air, **Carolyn** enjoyed the trampoline.

5. **The Buffalo River is usually fairly shallow and slow moving**, which makes it safe for a family float, but now it is in flood.

6. The dog barked for only **an hour.**
   (conveys that the dog barked for no longer than an hour)

ACTIVITY 8.8 WORKING TOGETHER: *Correcting Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers*



Work alone or with a partner to rewrite the following sentences, adding or rearranging words to correct the dangling and misplaced modifiers. If you are working in pairs or groups, try fixing each modifier problem in two different ways.

EXAMPLE: Snow covered the yard that was blowing in from the north.
Snow that was blowing in from the north covered the yard.

1. There are many young people wearing strapless prom dresses and black tuxedoes giggling as they cross the street.

2. Grazing and whipping around their tails to brush off the flies, I was surrounded by the horses.

3. Too tired for words, my head nodded as I fell asleep over my homework.

4. To swim the length of the pool underwater, Annie's lungs must be full of air.

5. Excited by the sound of the street band, concentrating on the work was difficult for Mark.

6. You might win the lottery by buying that ticket or just fund someone else's winning, which would be terrific.

7. He put a stepladder on the side of the house that was 8 feet tall.

8. Because it was cold, Simon ran to the closest store he could find in his jacket.

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ACTIVITY 8.9 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Adjectives and Adverbs to Describe*

Think of a famous person, someone your classmates will probably be familiar with, too. Write a paragraph describing this person in as much detail as possible without actually stating his or her name. In a small group (or in front of the class), read your descriptions and see who can guess the person you are describing. Ask the person who guesses correctly which words tipped him or her off. Are they adjectives, adverbs, or another part of speech?



ACTIVITY 8.10 WORKING ONLINE: *Adjective-Adverb Review*

Take the Chapter 8 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. Adjectives describe nouns and pronouns, telling *how many*, *which*, or *what kind*.
2. Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs, telling *when, where, why, how,* and *to what degree* or *extent* something was done.
3. The comparative form of adjectives and adverbs compares two or more things using an *-er* ending or the words *more* and *less.*
4. The superlative form of adjectives and adverbs compares three or more things using *–est* or the words *most* and *least*.
5. There are several common irregular adjective and adverb forms that are best handled through memorizing: *good, well, bad, little, many,* and *far.*
6. Be careful not to stack too many modifiers before a noun.
7. Dangling and misplaced modifiers occur when single words and words groups are not positioned closely enough to the word they mean to describe.

HINT

As you work with description in Activity 8.9, see Chapter 21.

Conjunctions and Prepositions

9

[*How do conjunctions (such as* and, but, *and* or*) and prepositions (such as* of, across, *and* during*) function like bridges in sentences? Use this image to help you explain the comparison.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Conjunctions
  - Coordinating conjunctions
  - Correlative conjunctions
  - Conjunctive adverbs
  - Subordinating conjunctions
- Prepositions

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

As we learned in Chapter 3, the words that we use to write and speak (parts of speech) can be divided into four basic groups: those that show action or being (verbs), those that name (nouns and pronouns), those that describe (adjectives and adverbs), and those that link (conjunctions and prepositions). **Conjunctions** (such as *and, as,* and *however*) and **prepositions** (such as *in, of,* and *to*) hold crucial sentence parts together; without them, we would be left with a sentence like the following:

1. The last leg _____ the trip _____ Alton starts _____ Highway 60 just south _____ Springfield _____ continues _____ 60 curves _____ the south _____ 20 miles _____ then turns east again, gaining elevation _____ it passes _____ the Mark Twain National Forest.

Although sentence 1 has nouns, verbs, and modifiers, most of us wouldn't try to give anyone directions without the needed prepositions and conjunctions, as in sentence 2:

2. The last leg of the trip to Alton starts with Highway 60 just south of Springfield and continues as 60 curves around to the south for about 20 miles and then turns east again, gaining elevation as it passes into the Mark Twain National Forest.

Conjunctions

There are four kinds of conjunctions: coordinating, correlative, conjunctive adverbs, and subordinating.

Coordinating Conjunctions

Of all the types of conjunctions, we use the coordinating ones most often. **Coordinating conjunctions** show that parts of a sentence are equal. They link similar grammatical units: verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, other conjunctions, prepositions, phrases, and clauses. There are only seven coordinating conjunctions, and of this group only five are used most of the time. Notice in the following chart that *but* and *yet* are placed together because they are virtually synonyms (you can use *yet* in place of *but* for variety). Also while the word *for* is frequently used as a preposition (as in the clause "she cared *for* the girls"), it is rarely used as a coordinating conjunction.



Use the acronym FANBOYS (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*) as a quick and helpful way to remember coordinating conjunctions.

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

and	but/yet	or	so	nor	for

For help in memorizing the coordinating conjunctions, you can use the acronym *fanboys,* as shown in the following chart. Also, remember that while *but* and *yet* can be used as synonyms, coordinating conjunctions express different relationships between ideas.

ACRONYM	REASON TO USE	EXAMPLE
For	why (because)	Pete was sad, *for* Ana had broken the date.
And	agreement and addition	Carlos *and* Maria believe in democracy.
Nor	neither option	Gareth will not go to the rally, *nor* will he go to the party later.
But	contrast	She believes in voting, *but* she doesn't like any of the candidates.
Or	alternatives	I am going to get up *or* go back to sleep.
Yet	contrast	He believes in voting, *yet* his best friend does not.
So	cause/effect	Kate sat down next to me, *so* I left.

English Review Note

Avoid using coordinating conjunctions with subordinating conjunctions.

The following examples show how several parts of sentences can be linked with coordinating conjunctions.

1. **Verbs:** When the deer fly bit him, Zach jumped from his seat *and* dropped his sandwich.
2. **Nouns:** Trying to swat the fly, Zach *and* Franny almost tipped over the canoe.
3. **Pronouns:** After that, he *and* she laughed and vowed to be more careful.
4. **Adjectives:** The next insect that buzzed them was a black *and* yellow hornet.
5. **Adverbs:** This time Franny and Zach remained quietly *but* nervously seated.
6. **Conjunctions:** If *or* when the hornet returned, Franny was prepared to swat it.
7. **Prepositions:** Turkey vultures circled above *but* near the canoe.
8. **Phrases:** Pointing to a sign along the river *and* reading it aloud, Zach said, "'One mile to Niagara Falls.' What do you suppose that means?"
9. **Clauses:** Franny joked that maybe the vultures knew something Zach and she didn't, *but* she did wonder why the current seemed to be speeding up.

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ACTIVITY 9.1 *Choosing Coordinating Conjunctions*

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the appropriate coordinating conjunctions. Notice that a comma is used with a coordinating conjunction between two *main* clauses.

EXAMPLE: After raking fifty bags of leaves *and* carrying them to the curb, Allen contemplated cutting down all of his trees.

1. Bumper sticker: "I used up all of my sick days, ____ I am calling in dead."
2. In the fall Jackson is going to the University of Kansas ___ Kansas State University.
3. The mouse didn't have much chance to escape, ____ was the cat going to give it one.
4. Greg wanted to visit the bathroom, ___ he had just finished a 20-ounce soda, ___ the movie was too exciting to leave.
5. Driving from Memphis, Art wanted to vacation at the Florida Keys ___ Padre Island.

6. Madeline couldn't get away from work that often, ____ when she did, she liked walking along the Chesapeake Bay seashore ____ hiking in George Washington National Forest.
7. Scientists have looked into the deep ocean ____ found many odd life forms.
8. Staring out the window ____ feeling depressed, Maggie saw her boyfriend's reflection cheering at the TV, bouncing on the couch, ____ generally acting as if the world was wonderful.

Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions should seem familiar because they have some coordinating conjunctions attached to them. However, correlatives come in *pairs* to link parts of sentences that are grammatically equivalent: verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and so forth. Note the following list:

CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS

both…and	just as…so	not only…but also
either…or	neither…nor	whether…or

Here are several examples containing correlative conjunctions:

1. **Nouns:** *Either* Nat *or* Bobby will have to mow the backyard.
2. **Noun phrases:** *Neither* Shawntay's mother *nor* her father will agree to letting her get her ears pierced until she is at least 13.
3. **Clauses:** *Just as* nearly 40,000 pets were sickened or killed by tainted pet food recently, *so* too will other animals and also people continue to suffer in the United States from improperly inspected imported food.

Use a comma with a correlative conjunction *only* if it separates two *clauses*, as in sentence 3 and the following example:

Either Nat will have to mow the backyard, *or* Bobby will have to do it.

ACTIVITY 9.2 Choosing Correlative Conjunctions

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the appropriate correlative conjunctions. Notice that a comma is used with a correlative conjunction between two *main* clauses.

EXAMPLE: You will find the hammer *either* in the workroom *or* in the garage.

1. The blizzard will strike _____ today _____ tomorrow but on the weekend.
2. _____ has government spending on domestic priorities decreased dramatically in the past 7 years, _____ the national debt has risen to $9 trillion.
3. _____ private security companies like Blackwater _____ Triple Canopy continue on the government's payroll may depend on _____ they are willing to assume responsibility for their actions _____ not.

4. Many skeptics do not believe that _____ the increase in violent hurricanes _____ the melting of glaciers are evidence of global warming.
5. _____ is Alltoona Lake, in Acworth, Georgia, almost dry, _____ the entire Southeast is suffering from a terrible drought.
6. _____ the Dumbo octopus _____ the vampire squid may qualify as the most unusual deepwater animal.
7. Many experts believe that today the United States is _____ safer from terrorist threats _____ better able to care for its citizens than it was in 2001.
8. _____ plant-eating dinosaurs help humans in the fictional world of *Dinotopia*, _____ do the humans help the plant-eating dinosaurs.

Conjunctive Adverbs

Unlike coordinating and correlative conjunctions—which can link words, phrases, and clauses—**conjunctive adverbs** link only main clauses. They hold together two separate but closely related ideas and are therefore punctuated with a semicolon before and a comma after. A list of common conjunctive adverbs follows:

CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS

also	further	likewise	nonetheless	then
anyway	furthermore	meanwhile	now	thereafter
besides	however	namely	otherwise	therefore
consequently	incidentally	nevertheless	similarly	thus
finally	instead	next	still	undoubtedly

English Review Note

Review this chart and memorize the meanings of these words.

Here are several sentence examples using these conjunctions:

1. Alex used to eat too much ice cream at night; *however*, he solved the problem by using a smaller bowl.
2. Our gas bill is too high this month; *therefore*, we will lower the thermostat next month.
3. Facebook has 27 million users; *furthermore*, it is the sixth most-accessed website in the world.

As you can see, each conjunctive adverb separates two main clauses that could be stand-alone sentences. Notice, too, that conjunctive adverbs (like other adverbs) can often be moved to various places in a sentence. When they are used simply as adverbs, they are not separating main clauses and therefore are not set off with a semicolon (as with *therefore* in this sentence). We could easily rewrite sentence 1 above to read:

4. Alex used to eat too much ice cream at night. He solved the problem, however, by using a smaller bowl.

When using conjunctive adverbs as simple adverbs, you may set them off with commas or not, depending on the flow and meaning of your sentence.

English Review Note

The semicolon is often used differently in other languages, so take care that you are using it correctly. (See Chapter 16 for more on the semicolon.)

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ACTIVITY 9.3 *Choosing Conjunctive Adverbs*

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the appropriate conjunctive adverbs; several may work in the same spot. Be sure to use a semicolon before and a comma after a conjunctive adverb separating *main* clauses but only commas or no punctuation when the conjunctive adverb is used as a simple adverb.

EXAMPLE: I'm going ___now___ to swim laps; ___otherwise___, there is no reason for me to be at the pool today.

1. They wanted to go to a downtown theater; _____, they went to one in midtown.
2. Sheila thinks that *American Idol* is the best reality show on TV; _____, Todd votes for *Survivor*.
3. Gamling: "We cannot win." Theoden: "No, but we will meet them in battle _____."
4. Two million Americans regularly play World of Warcraft (WOW); _____, three million Chinese also play.
5. Andy heard the dreaded news: "You will _____ have to pay for your own tuition; _____, you must now also pay for your own insurance."
6. The trail to the bottom of the Grand Canyon was long and steep; _____, the hikers put padding in the toes of their boots to prevent blisters.
7. Boris said, "I love playing WOW; _____, how else can I meet new people?
8. Karim should be at home until 6:00; _____, you will find him on his way to the concert in Lawrence.

Subordinating Conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions are the fourth type of conjunction and are used to introduce adverb clauses. Whereas coordination expresses an equal relationship between sentence parts, subordination shifts the focus away from the subordinated part. Words, phrases, and clauses are often subordinated in sentences. Below you will see a list of common subordinating conjunctions. Remember that some of these conjunctions can function as other parts of speech (for example, as prepositions: *before, after, until*).

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

after	because	in order that	than	when
although	before	now that	that	whenever
as	even if	once	though	where
as if	even though	rather than	till (less formal than *until*)	whereas
as long as	if	since	unless	wherever
as though	if only	so that	until	while

Here are several example sentences using these conjunctions:

1. *After* he ran in the New York Marathon, Yousef couldn't walk without pain for a week.

2. *Although* "sundown" towns are largely in the country's past, discrimination still lives.

3. *Because* Latisha enjoys playing chess, many of her friends think she's weird.

Each of these sentences begins with a subordinating conjunction that helps to show an adverbial function (shows *when, where, why, how, to what degree*). The adverb clause in sentence 1 tells *when* Yousef couldn't walk without pain, and in sentence 2 it tells *when* the "sundown towns" existed. The *because* conjunction in sentence 3 tells *why* Latisha's friends think she's strange. Because adverbs are often movable parts in sentences, we could shift the subordinate clauses in our example sentences past the main clauses, like this:

4. Many of her friends think she's weird *because* Latisha enjoys playing chess.

When adverb clauses begin sentences (as in this one), they usually require a comma, but when they follow a main clause, they usually do not. Note that subordinate clauses are always incomplete sentences and must be attached to a main clause to avoid creating a sentence fragment.



See Chapter 12 for detailed help on using subordination and coordination.



For more on punctuating subordinate clauses, see Chapters 11, 15, and 16.

ACTIVITY 9.4 *Choosing Subordinating Conjunctions*

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the appropriate subordinating conjunctions; several may work in the same spot. Notice that a comma marks the end of an adverb clause when it begins a sentence, but not when the adverb clause follows the main clause.

EXAMPLE: *Until* Angelo learns how to parallel park, he won't pass his driver's test.

1. _____ Jerry isn't feeling well, he stays home from school.
2. Evo Morales opposed the UN ban on products made from the coca plant _____ he became Bolivia's first indigenous president.
3. _____ many of the group weren't ready to play, Bruce started warming up the crowd.
4. _____ more than a million people die from malaria each year, it is past time to commit more international resources to controlling the disease.
5. One child will continue to die of malaria in Africa every 30 seconds _____ more effort is spent on controlling the illness.
6. Amy asked, "_____ the government really cares about New Orleans, why does the city still lack vital funding for recovery?"
7. FEMA was reorganized _____ it could better handle domestic crises like hurricanes.
8. Carl saw two meteors flash across the horizon _____ he was admiring the night sky.

Prepositions

Prepositions are an important type of sentence connector, one that we use even more than coordinating conjunctions. In fact, we use prepositions even in fairly short sentences. Notice the underlined prepositions in this sentence and in the two before it. **Prepositions** (such as *in, on,* and *near*) are short words that often (but not always) show location; they connect nouns and pronouns to sentences in word groups called **prepositional phrases** (such as *on the floor*). These phrases give information about

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some other part of the sentence, so they work as adjective or adverb phrases as in the following example:

She saw the DVD case lying *on* the floor.

The following chart lists many common prepositions, some of more than one word. Notice that some prepositions can work as other parts of speech. For example, *for* can also be a coordinating conjunction. *Since, until,* and *because (of)* are often used as subordinating conjunctions. The preposition *like* is commonly misused as a subordinating conjunction (to mean *as* or *as if* instead of *resembling*). While many of the following prepositions do show location, notice that others show relationships like time (*when*), addition (*in addition to*), cause (*due to*), and exception (*except*). Also, some prepositions of location can be used to show time (*in, by, at, on, before, after*).

PREPOSITIONS

LOCATION		
above	behind	off
across	below	on
after	beneath	onto
against	beside	out (out of)
ahead of	between	outside
along	beyond	over
amid	by	past
among	down	through
around	from	toward
at	in	under
atop	inside	up
before	into	upon

OTHER USES	
about	in addition to
according to	in place of
as	in spite of
aside from	instead of
as well as	like
because of	of
by way of	regarding
despite	since
due to	till
during	until
except (except for)	with
for	without

Here are several examples showing how prepositions can be used:

1. Tom put his soft drink *on* the table.
2. Sheila handed her coat *to* him.
3. Loretta picked up her daughter's toys *from* the floor.

Sentences 1 and 2 use prepositional phrases that show location; "*on* the table" ends in a noun, while "*to* him" ends with a pronoun. Sentence 3 has another prepositional phrase of location, "*from* the floor," but note that the boxed verb, *picked up,* is a phrasal verb with the preposition *up* attached. *Up* is part of the verb and does not begin a prepositional phrase.



For more on phrasal verbs, see Chapter 4.

4. Salvador was excited *about* learning guitar.
5. *During* the subway ride, Marta began to read quietly to herself.

Sentence 4 illustrates a prepositional phrase that tells *why* rather than location. Example 5 shows when ("*during* the subway ride"), but notice that the boxed infinitive, *"to read,"* is not part of a prepositional phrase. *To* in front of a base verb form like *read* indicates an infinitive, not a prepositional phrase.

6. *In addition to* the new VW bug, you have won a week's vacation *in* Orlando.
7. *Like* a bad dream, the lecture seemed as if it would never end.

Sentence 6 shows three words working as a prepositional unit. Sentence 7 shows *like* meaning to *resemble*. *As if* in this sentence is a subordinating conjunction and does not mean *like*. It would be incorrect in formal usage to say: "It seemed like the lecture would never end."

ACTIVITY 9.5 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Prepositions*



Working in pairs or groups, fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the appropriate preposition; several may work in the same spot. Notice that a comma marks the end of two or more prepositional phrases that begin a sentence.

EXAMPLE: Ahead of me on the highway, I saw a deer frozen in my headlights.

1. _____ the bridge Jerry found an old bicycle to fix up and give _____ his brother.
2. The summons was _____ Tiffany to appear _____ court _____ January 31.
3. Lesha played stickball _____ the boys _____ the playground.
4. _____ the problems with electronic voting machines, some were still used _____ the 2008 presidential and Congressional elections.
5. The plumber worked _____ the evening to unclog the toilet _____ once taking a break.
6. _____ the movie nobody wanted to leave because the murderer was still _____ the house.
7. Jake bought a hybrid _____ the gas-guzzling pickup his friends thought he wanted.
8. Some scientists are concerned _____ the ice breaking up _____ western Antarctica, an event that could raise worldwide ocean levels quickly.

ACTIVITY 9.6 *Identifying Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases*

Circle the prepositions—including all parts of multiword prepositions (*by way of*)—and underline the whole prepositional phrases in the following sentences. Be alert to phrasal verbs (*roll up* the window) and infinitives (*to leave* the store), which are *not* prepositional phrases. Notice too that gerunds (*-ing* verb forms) can be the objects of prepositions and so are part of the phrase ("upon *leaving*"). Remember that a comma marks the end of two or more prepositional phrases that begin a sentence.

EXAMPLE: The autumn leaves sifted down to blanket the yard with a deep layer of red and gold.

1. Because of his baking skills, Alex was responsible for bringing the pies.
2. The painter bid on the job without carefully thinking about it.
3. Due to a captain's error, 58,000 gallons of bunker fuel was spilled into San Francisco Bay.
4. Instead of cleaning up the mess, officials decided to cite and arrest volunteers who were working on addressing the spill themselves.
5. Aside from the deaths of more than 4,000 American soldiers in Iraq, 60,000 have been wounded or have undergone psychological trauma.

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6. After 12 hours of nonstop labor, Jenny finally moved all of the boxes into her new house and carried them to the right rooms.
7. Despite his sore back, Masoda used his throw net to catch fish in the Red Sea until sunset.
8. Jared pitched his first minor league game like a major league contender.



For more on writing about causes and effects, see Chapter 24. For a review of prewriting, see Chapter 1.



ACTIVITY 9.7 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Using Conjunctions and Prepositions with Causes and Effects***



Conjunctions and prepositions come in handy when describing the relationship between an event and its possible causes or effects. Turn to Chapter 24 topics list on pages 358–359 and, with a partner, choose an issue that interests you both. Next, use clustering and outlining to discover possible causes and effects. Now, one partner will draft a paragraph about the causes, while the other will write one about the effects. After you're finished with first drafts, go through your paragraphs together, and underline all the conjunctions and prepositions. Are there any you can replace with more effective choices? Is there a single sentence that doesn't use at least one of these parts of speech?



ACTIVITY 9.8 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Conjunction and Preposition Review***



Take the Chapter 9 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. Conjunctions and prepositions are word groups that link parts of sentences.
2. There are four types of conjunctions: coordinating, correlative, conjunctive adverbs, and subordinating.
3. Coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, or, so, yet, for, nor*) show that parts of a sentence are equal. When placed between main clauses, coordinating conjunctions use a comma before them.
4. Correlative conjunctions (example: *both . . . and*) come in pairs to link parts of sentences that are grammatically equivalent.
5. Conjunctive adverbs (example: *therefore*) are words often used to link main clauses. When used between main clauses, conjunctive adverbs are preceded with a semicolon and followed by a comma.
6. Subordinating conjunctions (example: *because*) are words used to begin adverb clauses. When adverb clauses begin sentences, they require a comma but usually do not when they come after a main clause.
7. Prepositions (example: *on*) are usually short words that often show location and that link nouns and pronouns to sentences in word groups called prepositional phrases.

Phrases

10

[*Have you ever had to assemble an item with multiple interacting parts? How does understanding the function of a piece help in constructing the whole?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Prepositional phrases
- Infinitive phrases
- Participial phrases
- Gerund phrases
- Absolute phrases
- Appositive phrases

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Having worked with the parts of speech in Unit Two, you know how important verbs and nouns (especially as subjects) are to making meaning in a sentence. You also know that modifiers give color and clarity to nouns and verbs to make sentences more interesting. In this chapter we will look more closely at how words function in groups—as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs—to form **phrases.**

Whereas a **clause** must have both a subject and a verb, a **phrase** may have a subject or a verb form, but not both. Because phrases can be nouns, adjectives, or adverbs, knowing these parts of speech will help you identify, construct, and punctuate phrases to make your writing more readable.

We have discussed the **noun phrase** (a noun with modifiers in front of it: *a tired father, the red backpack*) and the **verb phrase** (a main verb with its helpers: *will be going, should have gone*), but now we want to look more closely at several other phrases. In this chapter we will further explore the six phrases that are fundamental to our writing: **prepositional, infinitive, participial, gerund, absolute,** and **appositive.**



To review the parts of speech, see Chapters 3–9.

Prepositional Phrases



For more on prepositions, see Chapter 9.

A **prepositional phrase** begins with a preposition (*in, on, with, during*) and ends with a noun (or words working as a noun) or pronoun. Prepositional phrases function in a sentence as adjectives (telling *who, which one, what kind*, or *how many*) or adverbs (telling *when, where, why, how*, or *to what extent* or *degree*). We identify these phrases just as we did single adjectives and adverbs. Note the following examples:

ADJECTIVE

1. The **backpack** *with* the single strap is Jim's. (tells which one)
2. The **man** *on* the plane told me my fortune. (tells who)
3. Celia made a reservation for a **party** *of* three. (tells how many)

ADVERB

4. Dick accidentally **wounded** a friend *in* the face. (tells where)
5. The accident **happened** *during* rush hour. (tells when)
6. The victim **was rushed** to the hospital *with* great speed. (tells how)



Certain prepositions follow adjectives and verbs by convention, forming idiomatic phrases. When we substitute a different preposition, the phrase becomes nonstandard English. Memorize phrases that are new to you or that your instructor marks on your papers.

We use prepositional phrases more often than any other phrase. The adverb form is often easy to move, allowing greater sentence variety and increasing clarity and emphasis. For example, we could recast sentence 6 like this:

7. *With* great speed the victim **was rushed** to the hospital. (tells how)

If you begin a sentence with two or more prepositional phrases, use a comma:

8. *Ahead of* us *in* the right lane, **a semi** swerved too fast.

The following chart lists many common prepositions; some consist of more than one word. Notice that some prepositions can work as other parts of speech. For example, *for* can also be a coordinating conjunction. *Since, until, after,* and *because* are often used as subordinating conjunctions. Infinitives (*to* + a verb: *to jog*) can be confused as prepositional phrases, and phrasal verbs, a verb with a preposition attached (*pick up, call on, check out*) can also be mistaken for prepositional phrases.

PREPOSITIONS

Location			Other Uses	
above	behind	off	about	in addition to
across	below	on	according to	in place of
after	beneath	onto	as	in spite of
against	beside	out (out of)	aside from	instead of
ahead of	between	outside	as well as	like
along	beyond	over	because of	of
amid	by	past	by way of	regarding
among	down	through	despite	since
around	from	toward	due to	till
at	in	under	during	until
atop	inside	up	except (except for)	with
before	into	upon	for	without



While many of these prepositions show location, some show time and other relationships.



Prepositional phrases are generally short—two to five words long—and end with nouns (or pronouns).

ACTIVITY 10.1 *Seeing and Writing Prepositional Phrases*

Circle the prepositions that begin prepositional phrases, and underline the entire prepositional phrases in the following sentences. Watch out for infinitives, which are not prepositional phrases. In number 8 write three of your own sentences that contain prepositional phrases.

EXAMPLE: Along the roadside in a ditch, we saw a dozen broken beer bottles.

1. Instead of driving by the mess, we stopped to clean it up.
2. The Missouri River begins as a clear trout stream in northern Montana, but as it flows toward its namesake state, the river becomes muddy.
3. One way to remember that Lake Superior is the northernmost of the Great Lakes is to recall that on a map it sits above the other lakes.
4. In the past 10 years, malaria in Peru has grown from a handful of cases to more than a hundred thousand.
5. When spring creeps up from the south, hyacinths and daffodils are the first flowers to emerge from the earth.
6. To complete the deal, Jeffrey had to go to the west end of town to pick up a black leather bag with a lock on it.
7. Because of their fighting, neither of the brothers was allowed to go to the game.
8. Write three sentences that use at least one prepositional phrase in each. Circle the preposition, and underline the phrase. If you begin your sentence with two or more phrases, set them off with a comma.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____



Prepositional phrases are often contained within infinitive phrases.

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Infinitive Phrases

Infinitive phrases, along with gerund and participial phrases, are called **verbals,** meaning that they are a verb form with a sense of action, but they are incomplete verbs. Infinitives can never be the main verb in a sentence.



For more on infinitives, see Chapters 4 and 32.

Infinitives are usually marked by the word *to* in front of any base verb—for instance, *to sleep, to live, to swim*—and so they are easy to spot in a sentence. To form a phrase, combine the infinitive with another word or phrase: *to sleep* for a week (a prepositional phrase following the infinitive), *to live* each day (a noun phrase after the infinitive), *to swim* bravely (an infinitive modified by an adverb). Infinitives work as adjectives, adverbs, or nouns, as in the examples that follow.

ADJECTIVE

1. Peter has several new **paintings** *to sell*. (tells which paintings)

ADVERB

2. Hannah **joined** the group *to become* lead singer. (tells why she joined)

As with the adverb prepositional phrase, the infinitive adverb form can often be moved from one part of a sentence to another to add flexibility to your writing. For example, we could recast the previous sentence like this:

To become lead singer, Hannah **joined** the group.

Introductory adverb infinitive phrases require a comma.

NOUN

3. *To succeed* at his profession is **Simon's primary focus.** (is the sentence subject)

When noun infinitive phrases follow verbs like *hear, let, see, help, make,* and *watch*, the *to* is dropped:

We all saw him *(to) help* the elderly woman out of her car.

Also, the *to* may be dropped from infinitives in a pair or series after the first one:

Jackie learned early in life *to be* polite to strangers, *(to)* care for her friends, and *(to) love* her family.

ACTIVITY 10.2 *Seeing and Writing Infinitive Phrases*

Circle the infinitives and underline the whole infinitive phrases in the following sentences. Watch out for prepositional phrases that begin with *to*, which are not infinitive phrases but may be *included* within the infinitive phrase. In number 8 write three of your own sentences that use an infinitive phrase.

EXAMPLE: To listen to all of Megan's complaints would take all day.

1. To avoid repeating past mistakes, people need to know history.
2. Malaria, once thought to be under control, now threatens half the planet.
3. To feel needed is important to all human beings.
4. Kazuhiko was too startled by the rumor to say much.
5. To read Thomas Paine is to be reminded that people are supposed to protest when they feel that their leaders are leading them astray.

6. People want to visit Alaska's Tongass National Forest to walk among giant old-growth trees that have been alive longer than the United States has been a nation.

7. The question is how to do the best job of managing the forest for everyone.

8. Write three sentences that use an infinitive phrase in each. Circle the infinitive, and underline the phrase. If you begin your sentence with an adverb infinitive phrase, set it off with a comma.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

Participial Phrases

Participial phrases, like infinitives, have a sense of action but are incomplete verbs, never able to stand as the main verb in a sentence. Participial phrases begin with either a present or a past participle. The present participle has the same *-ing* ending for both regular and irregular verbs, but the past participle is different. Regular verbs take a *–d* or an *-ed* ending, while an irregular verb often ends in *-n* or *-t*. After the participle come modifying words, objects, and complements, so you will frequently find prepositional and infinitive phrases within participial phrases. Participial phrases function as adjectives.

As single-word modifiers, participles might look like this: *dancing* monkeys, *smiling* faces, *cooked* roast, *worn* fleece, or *bought* vote. Here are several examples of participial phrases within sentences:

PRESENT PARTICIPIAL PHRASE

1. *Skating* across the pond, **Marquita** heard the ice crack beneath her.
2. **Ozzie** yelled, "Get off the ice!" *waving* for her to come back to shore.
3. Fortunately, **a couple** *jogging* past the pond saw the problem and headed out to rescue Marquita.

In sentence 2, note the prepositional phrases and the infinitive phrase within the participial phrase: waving (for her) (to come back) (to shore).

PAST PARTICIPIAL PHRASE

4. *Frightened* by the close call, **Marquita** sat by her brother as she removed her skates.
5. **Ozzie**, *shaken* but acting unconcerned, laughed and said that it was no big deal.
6. Marquita made him promise not to tell their parents because she didn't want to be **a child** *punished* for her own bad judgment.

Participial phrases can be *essential* to the meaning of the word they are describing, as they are in the preceding sentences 3 and 6, or *nonessential*, as they are in the other sentences.



For more on participles, see Chapters 4 and 32.



Nonessential phrases, as in sentences 1, 4, and 5, require a comma. Sentence 2 uses an exclamation point instead of a comma.



Essential phrases, as in sentences 3 and 6, do not use a comma.

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When participial phrases are nonessential, they are set off with a comma, and they can often be repositioned in a sentence. For example, we might recast sentences 1 and 4 like this:

Marquita, *skating* across the pond, heard the ice crack beneath her.

Marquita sat by her brother as she removed her skates, *frightened* by the close call.

When shifting nonessential participial phrases, be careful that their placement and punctuation do not mislead your reader. If the comma were omitted in the previous sentence, Marquita's skates might seem to be frightened. Placing the participial phrase next to her brother, as in the following example, would again distort the intended meaning because Marquita (not Ozzie) is supposed to be the focus of the fright:

Frightened by the close call, her brother sat by Marquita as she removed her skates.

Also, be careful not to confuse gerunds (verbals ending in *-ing* but used as nouns) and the progressive verb tenses (*-ing* form that shows ongoing action/being) with participial phrases. Note that the following examples are *not* participial phrases:

Gerund phrase: Skating on ponds in the winter is fun.

Progressive verb tense: Marquita is (was) skating across the pond.

HINT

For more on punctuating essential and nonessential sentence parts, see Chapters 15–16.

HINT

Gerund phrases are nouns. Progressive verb tenses are verbs. Neither of these can be participial phrases, which are used as *adjectives*.

HINT

In the progressive tense, watch out for gerunds and verbs, neither of which is a participial phrase.

ACTIVITY 10.3 *Seeing and Writing Present Participial Phrases*

Circle the present participles and underline the whole participial phrases in the following sentences. In number 8 write three of your own sentences that use a present participial phrase.

EXAMPLE: Whispering quietly to his friend, Jonathan told him what had happened.

1. Alberto resigned from office, bowing to the weight of public opinion.
2. Not knowing how to light a fire in the wild, Chris spent a cold night, shivering in his tent.
3. A squirrel running across David's roof woke him early in the morning.
4. Watching his neighbor live-trap the pests, David resolved to do the same, pausing only to find out where to buy the traps.
5. Wendy loved sledding down hills in the winter, but walking home from the park, she usually felt cold and tired.
6. Snoring softly, Carla is sleeping on the living room couch.
7. Slithering on their bellies is how snakes get around, managing to glide, burrow, swim, and climb quite well.
8. Write three sentences that use a present participial phrase in each. Circle the participle, and underline the phrase. Set off all nonessential participial phrases with commas. Be sure that your phrases are describing the words that you intend.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

ACTIVITY 10.4 *Seeing and Writing Past Participial Phrases*

Circle the past participles and underline the whole participial phrases in the following sentences. Look for regular past participles ending in *-d* or *-ed* and irregular participles ending in *-n* or *-t*. In number 8 write three of your own sentences that use a past participial phrase.

EXAMPLE: Frustrated by the lack of service, Ella left the store, determined never to shop there again.

1. The wards located closest to the levies were the hardest hit when the levies broke in New Orleans.
2. Irritated at getting a ticket for it, Frank said, "What, they call throwing a few bottles out the window littering?"
3. The circus once called the Greatest Show on Earth has shrunk to a remnant of its former glory.
4. Faced with a hostile majority in the legislature, the governor was unable to carry out many of her reforms.
5. The Pilgrim family faced the awful cold of the New World winter, huddled together for warmth in a tight little group.
6. "I've been hit harder," the boxer declared, seemingly unconcerned with his rapidly swelling eye.
7. Gathered by our priest, we listened anxiously to the list of parish closings.
8. Write three sentences that use a past participial phrase in each. Circle the participle, and underline the phrase. Set off all nonessential participial phrases with commas. Be sure that your phrases are describing the words that you intend.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

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Gerund Phrases

The **gerund** is a verb form ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun, for example, *bicycling*, *sailing*, or *leaving*. **Gerund phrases**, the third type of verbal phrase, begin with a gerund and are followed by other words (such as prepositional phrases), and gerunds may appear in several places in a sentence. Note the following examples:

1. **Gerund subject:** *Bicycling* requires energy and caution.
2. **Gerund possessive subject:** Cindy's *bicycling* keeps her fit.
3. **Gerund subject complement:** One low-impact sport is *bicycling*.
4. **Gerund direct object:** My sister loves *bicycling*.
5. **Gerund object of preposition:** But sometimes Cindy jogs instead of *bicycling*.



No comma is used with gerunds.



Try the pronoun replacement test to identify gerunds.

While the gerund *-ing* looks like a participle, the gerund works as a *noun* rather than an adjective. One way to tell the difference between participles and gerunds is that gerunds can be mentally replaced with the pronoun *it* or *this*. Try this with the five previous sentence examples:

Sentence 1: *It* requires energy and caution.

Sentence 2: *It* keeps her fit.

Sentence 3: One low-impact sport is *this*.

Sentence 4: My sister loves *it*.

Sentence 5: But sometimes Cindy jogs instead of *this*.

Such pronoun replacement works with gerund phrases, but it does *not* work with participial phrases. Contrast the following examples:

Gerund phrase: *Bicycling* 80 miles in one day requires strength, persistence, and maybe a bit of craziness.

Participial phrase: *Bicycling* 80 miles, Cindy finished the first day of her ride across Kansas.

We can't say, "*It*, Cindy finished," but we can say, "*It* requires strength." The participial phrase tells about Cindy, the subject of its sentence, whereas the gerund phrase *is* the subject of its sentence. While the participial phrase requires a comma, the gerund does not.



Watch out for single participles, participial phrases, and verbs in the progressive tense, none of which is a gerund phrase. Using the *it* substitution will help you spot the gerund phrases. For #8, remember that gerund phrases do not use commas.

ACTIVITY 10.5 *Seeing and Writing Gerund Phrases*

Circle the gerund and underline the whole gerund phrases in the following sentences. For number 8 write three of your own sentences using a gerund phrase.

EXAMPLE: Plowing through e-mail is not the most exciting moment in Margot's morning.

1. Will you help with cleaning up the mess?
2. Raising a family takes time, energy, patience, and love.
3. We all appreciated Ellen's editing of the manuscript.
4. Spending more than they earn often makes people nervous, yet the United States as a nation is living on credit, with a national debt of more than $9 trillion.
5. Megan misses owning her own business.
6. Antonio's dream was playing drums in a metal band.
7. Keeping thermostats down in the winter and up in the summer is a good practice, saving consumers money and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Write three sentences that use a gerund phrase in each. Circle the gerund, and underline the phrase.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

Absolute Phrases

The **absolute phrase** resembles a participial phrase in that it uses a present (*–ing*) or past participle (*-d/-ed*, *-n/-t*), but it differs in one important respect: a noun or pronoun always precedes the participle. This noun or pronoun is called the subject of the phrase; combined with a participle, it can make the phrase appear to be a clause (which it is not). However, because absolute phrases lack complete verbs, they cannot stand on their own as complete sentences. Unless they are joined to an independent clause or rewritten as complete thoughts (e.g., through the addition of the verb *to be*), absolute phrases are sentence fragments.

Absolute phrases describe the rest of the sentence they are attached to, rather than modifying a single word; therefore, they can be in various positions within a sentence. Absolute phrases may also contain other word groups such as prepositional phrases. Here are several examples with the subjects of the phrases underlined once and the *participles* in italics:

Absolute Phrases Using Present Participles

1. [His voice *growing* hoarse from the bitter cold,] the quarterback barked out the final play of the game.
2. Jordan listened to the officer's accusations, [her fingers *drumming* nervously on the desk.]
3. [The game (*being*) almost over,] we left early to avoid the crowd.
4. [(With) his reel *jamming* for the third time,] Ted swore he would give up fishing.

Sentence 1 begins with an absolute phrase that gives extra information about the main clause, describing the quarterback's voice as he calls the play. The phrase is useful but not necessary to understand the main idea in the sentence. Note that by adding the helping verb *was* to the absolute phrase, we could rewrite the opening phrase as a stand-alone sentence. Similarly, the absolute phrase in sentence 2, which is placed at the end of the sentence, could be made an independent clause by adding the helping verb *were*.

Sentence 3 shows that *to be* (*being*) can sometimes be omitted in an absolute phrase when its meaning is understood. Sentence 4 is an example of an absolute phrase beginning with the word *with*. It is important to note that in such instances, *with* does not signal a prepositional phrase.

Recognizing and Building Absolute Phrases

To help you recognize and write absolute phrases, remember that a form of *to be* is missing from a stand-alone sentence, thereby reducing the main clause to a phrase, which is then attached with a comma to a main clause. Notice the following examples, which illustrate this change:

1. His voice was *growing* hoarse from the bitter cold. The quarterback barked out the final play of the game.
2. His voice was growing hoarse from the bitter cold, the quarterback barked out the final play of the game.
3. His voice *growing* hoarse from the bitter cold, the quarterback barked out the final play of the game.

Absolute phrases give writers a chance to vary the length and pattern of their sentences. These phrases are especially good at describing action and are often combined with participial phrases to make narrative and other forms of writing more interesting. Which of the following examples seems more readable to you?

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HINT

Remember that absolute phrases, like nonessential participial phrases, must be set off with a comma.

1. Jordan listened to the officer's accusations. Her fingers drummed nervously on the desk. She wondered what would happen next.
2. Jordan listened to the officer's accusations, [her fingers *drumming* nervously on the desk,] *wondering* what would happen next.

ABSOLUTE PHRASE

PARTICIPIAL PHRASE

Absolute Phrases Using Past Participles

Absolute phrases also can be formed using past participles by omitting a form of *to be* from a main clause. Past participles for regular verbs end in *-d* or *-ed* (*worked, laughed*) and often end in *-n* or *-t* for irregular verbs (*broken, bought*). Note the following examples (1 and 2 with regular and 3 and 4 with irregular verbs):

1. [The assignment *completed*,] Neva was able to finish her movie.
2. Neva relaxed back into her recliner, [her legs *crossed* at the ankle and her arms *outstretched*.]
3. [His ID stuck in his wallet,] James apologized and told the cashier to take the next customer.
4. J.T. felt safe for the night, [his shelter in the trees hidden from view.]

HINT

In Activity 10.6, watch out for single participles, participial phrases, gerunds, and verbs in the progressive tense, none of which are absolute phrases.

HINT

For #8, it may help to begin with two short sentences, one of which has a helper *being* verb and a present participle: "Thick chocolate was melting down the stick. The ice cream bar quickly turned into a gooey mess." After crossing out the *was*, we have an absolute phrase linked to a main clause: "Thick chocolate melting down its stick, the ice cream bar quickly turned into a gooey mess."

ACTIVITY 10.6 *Seeing and Writing Absolute Phrases with Present Participles*

In the following sentences underline the whole absolute phrase, circle the subject of the absolute, and double-underline the present participle. In sentences where absolute phrases omit the participle *being*—as in *the game (being) almost over*—the word is noted here in parentheses with a line through it. For number 8, write three of your own sentences that use an absolute phrase.

EXAMPLE: His hands shaking, the novice wizard tried to recover the pieces of his shattered wand.

1. With his delivery owl (~~being~~) missing, Ron Weasley had trouble sending mail.
2. The ship cruised through crystalline waters, three bottlenose dolphins riding the pressure waves off its bow.
3. My grandfather gazed defiantly at us through the heavy smoke, a fat cigar smoldering in his ashtray.
4. After our air conditioner broke down, our house was an oven, the temperature hovering around 90.
5. Its compressor (~~being~~) shot, the AC merely blew hot air around the living room.
6. Clichés oozing from every page, Paul's novel proved impossible to read, let alone revise.

7. With flames shooting into the air and sirens wailing on all sides, the news crew pushed on to question the survivors of the disaster.
8. Write three sentences, using an absolute phrase in each. Underline the absolute phrase, circle its subject, and double-underline the present participle.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

ACTIVITY 10.7 *Seeing and Writing Absolute Phrases with Past Participles*

In the following sentences underline the whole absolute phrase, circle the subject of the absolute, and double-underline the past participle. In number 8 write three of your own sentences that use an absolute phrase.

EXAMPLE: With Colorado defeated, the Red Sox won another World Series.

1. Both boys were a mess, their hands and arms covered in sticky green melted popsicle.
2. With the bowl of whipped cream shattered on the floor, 5-year-old Maria stared down at the mess and sobbed.
3. Their work nearly finished, the builders suddenly realized they had not put in a front door.
4. His guilt proven beyond a doubt, Bernie looked to Rudolph for salvation one last time.
5. With a challenging question finally asked, the candidate smiled charmingly and responded by shifting the blame, minimizing the significance, lying, and, last, attacking the questioner.
6. The tub filled to the top, Rosalina sank down into the warm water with a sigh.
7. The 59th Street Bridge had seen better days, its cables rusted and frayed, its concrete pillars covered in graffiti, its pavement cracked and rutted.
8. Write three sentences, each using a past participle in an absolute phrase. Underline the absolute phrase, circle its subject, and double-underline the past participle.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____



For #8, begin with two short sentences, one of which has a *to be* verb and a past participle: "Both boys were a mess. Their hands were covered in melted popsicle." After crossing out the *were*, we have an absolute phrase following a main clause: "Both boys were a mess, their hands covered in sticky melted popsicle."

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Appositive Phrases

HINT

Appositives usually require commas; all nonessential materials should be set off with commas.

The last of the six phrases, the appositive phrase, does not function as an adjective or an adverb, but it does add useful information to a sentence. **Appositive phrases** are word groups that rename or explain a noun or pronoun; they may be thought of as containing a synonym, or "stand-in" word, for a noun or pronoun. Most appositives are nonessential, giving useful but not vital information. Therefore, they should be set off with commas.

Here are several examples with the appositive phrases underlined and the "stand-in" words italicized:

1. **Noun appositive:** Mahalia Jackson, a *singer*, began performing at the age of 4.
2. **Noun phrase appositive:** Mahalia Jackson, perhaps the best gospel *singer* of all time, began performing at the age of 4.
3. **Noun phrase with clause appositive:** Mahalia Jackson—perhaps the best gospel *singer* of all time and one who was prominent in the Civil Rights Movement in the fifties and sixties—began performing at the age of 4.

Sentence 1 contains a single noun appositive, *singer*. This word stands in place of Jackson, giving a small bit of additional information about her. Sentence 2 offers more information with the modifiers, including the prepositional phrase. Sentence 3 gives the most information. Notice that nonessential appositives, seen above, can be set off by commas or dashes (or parentheses).

Appositives usually follow the word they describe, but they can be useful, too, as sentence openers, as in this example:

4. **Appositive as sentence opener:** A gospel *singer*, Mahalia Jackson began performing at the age of 4.

Because appositives usually contain nouns, they can also be gerunds and infinitives, as in the following examples:

5. **Gerund appositive**: Cesar Milan's life work, *training* problem dogs, has brought him international fame.
6. **Infinitive appositive:** One of human beings' worst tendencies—*to forget* last year's, last month's, and even yesterday's lessons—was on display as the cycle of violence continued.

In sentence 5 the gerund *training* stands in for *life work*, and the infinitive *to forget* stands in place of *tendencies* in sentence 6.

HINT

Remember that infinitives and gerunds can be (but are not necessarily) appositives. Test each word group by finding the word that stands in place of another that precedes it.

ACTIVITY 10.8 *Seeing and Writing Appositive Phrases*

Circle the appositive words and underline the appositive phrases in the following sentences. In number 8 write three of your own sentences using an appositive phrase.

EXAMPLE: Fire ants, aggressive defenders of their colony, will attack intruders large or small.

1. Snoop Dog, a well-known rapper and hip-hop artist, was born as Cordozar Calvin Broadus, Jr.

2. The symptoms of menopause—hot flashes, night sweats, and mood swings—can be helped through exercise, diet, and relaxation techniques.
3. Congress has recently given the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor that it can award, to Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama.
4. Antonio has adopted a new life motto: climbing every *other* mountain.
5. Hanging on by her fingertips, Jasmine knew that if she achieved her goal—to reach the top of the climbing wall—she would win the bet, a $50 prize.
6. Neil Young's newest album, the long-awaited *Chrome Dreams II*, has been called his best work in a decade.
7. We wondered about the beat-up old car, an ancient VW bug with a huge peace sign decaled on the engine compartment and bumper stickers that read "Tree-hugging dirt worshipper" and "Beware the Military Industrial Complex."
8. Write three sentences, using an appositive phrase in each. Circle the appositive, and underline the phrase. If you begin or end your sentence with an appositive phrase, set it off with a comma.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

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ACTIVITY 10.9 *Identifying Phrases: Mixed Review*

In the following essay write the name over each of the underlined phrases that we have worked with in this chapter: prepositional, infinitive, participial, gerund, absolute, and appositive. Don't be confused when you find several phrases within a word group. The overall name of the phrase is based on how the words work as a unit. For example, "Sledding down the steep hill, Barry flew over a bump" has a participle, *sledding*, and a prepositional phrase, *down the steep hill*, but as a whole we call the word group a participial phrase. The first two sentences are marked as an example.

The Day I Was Shot

prepositional *prepositional*
A shocking pain hit me directly above my eye. Blood poured down my
prepositional
face as I screamed in terror. I didn't know what had happened. I thought I had been shot. I turned around to see Brian, a tall, scrawny dork from my first-grade class, standing stiff with fear. His face turned white as the blood gushed from my head.

"You shot me!" I screamed at him.

"I didn't mean to," he mumbled.

Tears streamed down his face as he ran off, leaving me alone on the street. I didn't know what to do then. I stood on the corner of 57th Street, crying hysterically. The few blocks I had to walk home seemed to be too far for me to go. I panicked. My heart racing and hands shaking, I tried to run, but my knees went weak. I fell to the cold ground, scraping my hands and knees on the pavement. I was in even more pain then. Scared and dizzy, I tried pulling myself up from the ground. I slowly regained my balance and managed walking a few steps.

A woman in a truck drove past me and pulled over about 20 feet away. She was middle-aged, a woman around 50. "Maybe she's a nurse," I thought. She was wearing white pants and a blue shirt, the kind of shirt we put on over our clothes in art class. She sure looked like a nurse to me. She had a full head of gray hair and many wrinkles.

"Oh my Lord," she said, "what happened?"

"I think Brian shot me," I muttered, my eyes fixed on the sidewalk. The woman looked shocked. The white shirt I was wearing under my Rainbow Brite jumper was covered in my blood. She wanted to drive me home, but my mom had always warned me about getting in the car or even talking with strangers, so I refused.

"I live on 57th Street, in the blue house, 13410!" I told her.

"Okay, okay, I'll go!"

"Go get my daddy," I wailed.

(To be continued in Activity 11.5)

ACTIVITY 10.10 WORKING TOGETHER: *Reworking Phrases*



In pairs or small groups, share the sentences you wrote for item #8 for exercises 10.1–10.8. Rewrite one another's sentences replacing and/or adding different types of phrases; keep the ideas the same. For instance, you could rework a sentence with a prepositional phrase ("*To listen to all of Megan's complaints* would take all day.") so it contains a gerund phrase ("*Listening to all of Megan's complaints* would take all day.") or adds an appositive phrase—"To listen to all of Megan's complaints, *tirades about her workload and ex-boyfriend*, would take all day. Get feedback from your instructor.

ACTIVITY 10.11 WORKING ONLINE: *Phrases Review*



Take the Chapter 10 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. Phrases are word groups that may have a verb part or subject but not both.
2. There are six phrases in English.
3. Prepositional phrases begin with a preposition (often a word telling location—*in, on, near*) and end with a noun or pronoun. Prepositional phrases function as adjectives or adverbs.
4. Infinitive phrases are one of three verbal phrases and begin with *to* before a base verb (*to sing*) and function as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.
5. Participial phrases are another of the verbal phrases and are recognized by an *–ing* ending on a verb as a present participle (gallop*ing* horses) or a *–d/-ed* ending for the past participle of a regular verb (frighten*ed* children). Participial phrases usually function as adjectives.
6. Gerund phrases are the third verbal phrase and begin with a verb form ending in *–ing* (jogg*ing* three times weekly will keep a person in shape). Gerund phrases always function as nouns.
7. Absolute phrases are phrases that contain a participle, present or past, preceded by a noun (subject). These phrases describe the whole sentence to which they are attached.
8. Appositive phrases are word groups that usually follow a noun or pronoun and explain or rename. Every appositive phrase has a word that can take the place of the noun or pronoun it follows.

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Clauses and Sentence Types

11

[*People rely on one another to accomplish many tasks, one of which you can see in the accompanying photo. Write a brief paragraph telling either whom you regularly rely on when faced with a challenge or who most relies on you.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Clauses
  - Main clauses
  - Subordinate clauses
- Sentence types
  - Simple sentences
- Compound sentences
- Complex sentences
- Compound-complex sentences

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

The six phrases we worked with in Chapter 10 are crucial sentence parts, adding great flexibility to our writing. However, because phrases do not contain both a subject and verb, they cannot form complete sentences. Phrases rely on **clauses, which** *do* have both a subject and verb, to complete their meaning. Chapter 11 will help you practice clauses and see how they work together to form various **sentence types.**

Clauses

Clauses are critical sentence parts. Without them we could write only partial sentences like "On our way to the bank . . .," leaving readers in suspense, wanting to know what happened next. However, when we add a clause like "we saw a four-car pileup," we satisfy the reader's curiosity, completing the thought.

Clauses are of two sorts, main and subordinate. The **main** (or independent) **clause** contains a subject, a verb, and a complete thought, so it can function as a stand-alone (simple) sentence. A **subordinate** (or dependent) **clause** has a subject and a verb but lacks a complete thought and so cannot stand alone. Like a phrase, it depends on and must be attached to a main clause to form a sentence.

Notice how the main and subordinate clauses below can easily be combined:

1.	**Subordinate clause**	If enough toxic runoff enters a stream
	+	
	Main clause	It will kill the river.
	Combined clauses	If enough toxic runoff enters a stream, it will kill the river.
2.	**Main clause**	This is begining to happen in Virginia and Tennessee to
	+	the Clinch River.
	Subordinate clause	Which in the past has provided great fishing and good drinking water for nearby towns.
	Combined clauses	This is beginning to happen in Virginia and Tennessee to the Clinch River, which in the past has provided great fishing and good drinking water for nearby towns.

We will focus next on the three kinds of subordinate clauses—noun, adjective, and adverb—which work just as their names suggest.



Subordinate clauses standing alone are sentence fragments.



In some languages, a subordinate clause can stand alone; in English, it must combine with a main clause to form a complete sentence.

Noun Clauses

Noun clauses are subordinate clauses that work like single nouns and noun phrases. They are often used as subjects, as in the following examples:

1. **Single-word subject:** Allen's comment shocked his sister.
2. **Noun clause subject:** *What* Allen said about his wife shocked his sister.

Noun clauses are useful because they give more information than single nouns. In sentence 1 we learn that the single-word subject (*comment*) shocked his sister, but we don't know why. However, in sentence 2 we find out through the noun clause that it was "what Allen said *about his wife*" that shocked his sister.

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Here are some example sentences that use noun clauses in other ways:

1. **Direct object:** The polls showed that two-thirds of the country wanted to end the war.
2. **Object of preposition:** John hopes to protect the habitat for whatever animals still live in the estuary.
3. **Complement:** The 1960s revolution in Chile was exactly what the Chicago economists were hoping for.
4. **Appositive:** The coach's plea, that the offense should become more aggressive, was easy to understand.



Use the *it* replacement test to identify noun clauses.

In each of the preceding sentences, just as with gerund phrases, notice that the noun clauses can be replaced with the pronoun *it*. For example, in sentence 1 we could say, "The polls showed *it*" or for sentence 2, "John hopes to protect the habitat for *it*" (or in this case "for *them*").

However, this pronoun replacement method does not work with adjectives clauses, which can be confused with noun clauses. Notice the difference between the following examples:

Noun clause: Some health experts say *that* cold temperatures are perfectly safe to exercise in.

Adjective clause: The researchers published studies *that* back up this assertion.

While we can say, "Some health experts say *it*," we cannot say, "The researchers published studies *it*." This replacement test will help you distinguish between noun and adjective clauses.

When noun clauses used as direct objects begin with the word *that*, writers often omit *that*. Sometimes this can make it difficult to see where the noun clause begins.

Deleted *that:* I thought (that) the game was almost over.

Because noun clauses are almost always an essential part of sentences—unlike many adverb and adjective clauses—they are rarely set off with commas. Perhaps for this reason they do not usually cause punctuation problems.

The following is a list of common cue words that begin noun clauses:

CUE WORDS FOR NOUN CLAUSES

how	that	whatever	where	which	whoever	whose
if	what	when	whether	who	whom	why

Some of these words (especially *who, which,* and *that*) can also introduce adjective clauses. Some (especially *if* and *when*) can also begin adverb clauses.

ACTIVITY 11.1 *Seeing and Writing Noun Clauses*

Using the preceding chart, fill in the blanks with a cue word that makes sense to you, and then underline the entire noun clause. In number 8 write three of your own sentences that each include a noun clause.

EXAMPLE: Charlene insisted *that* she was right, even though everyone else argued *that* she was wrong.

1. Willis didn't want _____ his friends did from life.
2. Lucy explained _____ the rock came to break the kitchen window.
3. _____ Harold needed to see a dentist was clear to him.
4. The whole class decided _____ locating noun clauses wasn't all that difficult.
5. _____ will bring the pies to Thanksgiving dinner has not yet been decided.
6. Marcus wasn't responsible for _____ his friend's dog wandered.
7. Mary Jane Watson wanted to know _____ Peter Parker would ever have the courage to tell her _____ he loved her.
8. Write three sentences that use a noun clause in each. Circle the cue word, and under line the clause.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____



Remember to use the *it* replacement test to distinguish between noun and adjective clauses.

Adjective Clauses

Adjective clauses (or relative clauses) work like single adjectives and adjective phrases, describing nouns and pronouns, for example:

1. **Single adjective:** Quenton needs a *quiet* room to sleep well.
2. **Adjective clause:** Quenton needs a room *that is quiet* to sleep well.

Both sentences 1 and 2 tell what kind of room Quenton needs, a quiet one. Notice that the single adjective, *quiet*, is in front of the noun it describes, while the clause, *that is quiet*, follows the noun. Adjective clauses can begin with several cue words, including *whose, whom, when, where,* and *why.* Usually, however, they begin with one of the following relative pronouns, using *who* to refer to people and *which/that* to refer to animals and things:

RELATIVE PRONOUNS: ADJECTIVE CLAUSE CUE WORDS

who	which	that

These words also sometimes introduce noun clauses.

To punctuate adjective clauses correctly, you need to determine whether they are *essential* to the meaning of the sentence.



Essential clauses do not use commas.

Essential Adjective Clauses

If clauses are **essential,** that is, if removing them would alter the main idea, you do *not* use a comma, as in the following examples:

1. Chuck Comeau is an owner *who* brought his fashion business back to Plainville, Kansas.
2. Plainville is a town *that* offers friendly, loyal, hardworking people.

In sentence 1 we don't know why we should be interested in Comeau until reading the adjective clause and finding out that he is the owner who brought a business to a small town. Sentence 2 uses the adjective clause to tell something important about Plainville. Therefore, the clauses are essential and *not* set off with a comma. We often use the relative pronouns *who* and *that* to signal essential adjective clauses.



Take care not to repeat the subject or object in an adjective clause.

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Nonessential adjective clauses require commas.

Nonessential Adjective Clauses

Nonessential adjective clauses can be cut from a sentence without significantly changing its meaning, so we set them off with commas whether they appear in the middle of the main clause or at the end, as in the following examples:

1. Marvelle Powell, *who* wanted to be an astronaut as a child, is now a bank president.
2. In her teens she began to develop vertigo, *which* changed her mind about career options.

Sentence 1 emphasizes that Powell is a bank president but adds a less-important comment about her childhood dream. *Who* and *which* clauses that immediately follow proper nouns are nonessential. Sentence 2 uses the *which* clause to add interesting but nonessential information about Powell's vertigo problem. The word *that* is used to begin essential clauses and therefore does not call for a comma.



To tell the difference between a noun and an adjective clause, use the *it* replacement test.

To avoid confusing adjective with noun clauses, you can use the pronoun replacement test we practiced in the preceding section on noun clauses, as in the following:

3. **Adjective:** Plainville is a town *that* attracts friendly, loyal, hardworking people.
4. **Noun:** Chuck Comeau says that Plainville is a town of friendly, loyal, hard-working people.

It makes no sense to say, "Plainville is a town *it*"; therefore, the clause in sentence 3 cannot be a noun clause. Another test is trying to substitute *which* in place of *that* in both clauses. *Which* can replace *that* in the sentence 3 adjective clause but not *that* in the noun clause of sentence 4. We would not say, "Comeau says *which* Plainville is a town. . . ."



For more on essential versus nonessential adjective clauses, see Chapters 12, 15, and 32.



Be cautious with noun clauses, which often look like adjective clauses. Noun clauses are essential and so never take commas.

ACTIVITY 11.2 *Seeing and Writing Adjective Clauses*

In the following sentences underline the adjective clauses and circle the relative pronoun (*who, which, that, where*). Remember the *it* and the *which/that* replacement tests. In number 8 write three of your own sentences that use adjective clauses.

EXAMPLE: Barry Bonds, who broke Hank Aaron's home-run record, has been indicted on charges of perjury in relation to steroid use.

1. Some police officers who have served as soldiers in Iraq are now having difficulty adjusting to the use of force with civilian lawbreakers.
2. Hundreds of water birds are being rescued by the International Bird Research Rescue Center, which found them floundering in San Francisco Bay, where they had been soaked in oil from the *Cosco Busan* oil spill.
3. As air travel becomes more difficult, there are some passengers who have had to wait in their plane for up to 8 hours.
4. Russell decided to return to college because he is no longer happy with his roofing job, which keeps him outside in extreme weather.
5. Cyclone Sidr is the one that killed fifty-two people in Bangladesh.
6. Caleb saw that after paying for dinner he would have only five dollars left, which he hoped would cover the tip.
7. The young bald eagle that was following the mallards downriver looked hungry.

8. Write three sentences, using an adjective clause in each. Circle the cue word, and underline the clause.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Adverb Clauses

Adverb clauses function like single adverbs and adverb phrases, describing verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They give information about a main clause, telling *when, why, where, how,* and *to what extent,* as in the following sentences:

1. *When* Gabrielle arrived, her friends shouted, "Happy birthday!" (when)
2. *Because* Lauren had a cold, she went to bed early. (why)
3. *Where* birds of paradise gather, colorful plumage dazzles the eye. (where)
4. *As if* he were drowning, Travis gasped for breath at the top of the stairs. (how)
5. *Until* the balloon almost popped, Ho San filled it with water. (extent)

Adverb clauses, like other adverbs, can often be moved in a sentence. For example, we could reverse the subordinate and main clauses in any of the preceding examples:

6. Ho San filled the balloon with water until it almost popped.

Commas with Adverb Clauses

When beginning a sentence with an adverb clause (unless it is only a few words long), set the clause off with a comma. (See previous examples 1–5.)

However, if the adverb clause follows the main clause, a comma usually is not needed. (See example 6.) Exceptions are *though, although,* and *even though,* which show concession; these words usually use a comma even when following a main clause.

Subordinating Conjunctions

Adverb clauses always begin with cue words called **subordinating conjunctions,** which you can see in the following list:

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: ADVERB-CLAUSE CUE WORDS

after	because	in order that	than	when
although	before	now that	that	whenever
as	even if	once	though	where
as if	even though	rather than	till	whereas
as long as	if	since	unless	wherever
as though	if only	so that	until	while

Some of these words can also introduce prepositional phrases (especially *after, before, until*), noun clauses (especially *when* and *where*), and adjective clauses (especially *when* and *where*). Notice that the underlined word groups in the following sentences are *not* adverb clauses:



Use the *it* and *which* replacement tests to be sure that you are writing adjective rather than noun clauses. Use commas with nonessential adjective clauses.



It may be difficult to master verb tenses in time clauses. Ask yourself, when did the action in the clause occur—past, present, or future? And how does it relate the action in the main clause?



Be sure not to use the words *although* and *but* in the same sentence.



Review this chart and learn the differences between the adverb clause cue words, especially similar-sounding ones such as *even though* and *even if.*

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For more on adverb clauses, see Chapter 8.

1. **Prepositional phrase:** After several hours, we could wait no longer.
2. **Noun clause:** Emma is the one who saw where the accident happened.
3. **Adjective clause:** Rodney would never forget the awful moment when he lost his swimming trunks after a dive from the high board.

To avoid confusing adverb clauses with noun and adjective clauses, remember that most adverb clauses can be shifted within a sentence and tell about a verb: *when, where, why, how,* or *to what degree or extent* something was done.

ACTIVITY 11.3 *Seeing and Writing Adverb Clauses*

Using the preceding chart, fill in the blanks in the following sentences with a cue word that makes sense to you; then underline the entire adverb clause. In number 8 write three of your own sentences, each using an adverb clause.

EXAMPLE: Because the foundation has cracks, the house floods when it rains.

1. _____ Carmen got home from work, she was happy to see that her husband had cooked dinner for the family.
2. _____ we stop shopping so much, thought Avery, we will drown in credit card debt.
3. _____ you are visiting south-central Colorado, be sure to see Great Sand Dunes National Monument, _____ it takes you out of your way a bit.
4. _____ more states adopt higher fuel-efficiency standards for trucks and SUVs, the federal government creeps slowly toward the same goal.
5. _____ money is not showering from the heavens, there are still ways to qualify for scholarships, grants, and low-interest student loans.
6. _____ spend his weekend in front of the TV, Bernie decided to kayak the Minnesota Boundary Waters, _____ they are a 6-hour drive from his home.
7. _____ Caleb almost passed out, he kept inflating his air mattress while Cora just unrolled her Thermarest and let it self-inflate.
8. Write three sentences that use an adverb clause in each. Circle the cue word, and underline the clause.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____



Use the clause shift test to be sure that you are writing adverb rather than adjective or noun clauses. Use commas with adverb clauses that begin sentences but not with those that follow main clauses (unless using *though, even though,* or *although*.)



The type and number of clauses identify a grammatical sentence type.

Sentence Types

Having a good sense for the parts of speech, phrases, and clauses, you know most of the basic sentence grammar you need to write clear, readable, and correct sentences. Now you simply combine this knowledge to work with sentence types.

There are only four grammatical **sentence types** in English. Each is based on the clauses it contains: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex.

Simple Sentences

A **simple sentence** contains *one* main clause with *no* subordinate clauses. It may be short and truly "simple" (as in uncomplicated), or it may have several phrases that lengthen it. Here are several examples of simple sentences with the verbs underlined twice and the subjects once:

1. Warren wants a better job.
2. Warren and his friends want a better job.
3. Warren and his friends want a better job and are willing to spend the next two years of their lives studying hard to reach their goal.

Sentence 1 has a single subject, *Warren*, and a single verb, *wants*. But we could add another subject, *friends,* as in sentence 2. Also, we could add another verb, *are willing*, and include several phrases, *to spend the next two years of their lives studying hard to reach their goal,* as in sentence 3. Simple sentences can be short or long and may contain commas. However, they have only *one* main clause and *no* subordinate clauses.



Compound sentences require a comma before a coordinating conjunction linking two main clauses.

Compound Sentences

A **compound sentence** merely adds *one or more* main clauses to a simple sentence. This creates a sentence with *two (or more) sets* of subjects and verbs *(main clauses)* that are usually divided with a coordinating conjunction like *and* or *but* and a comma—or a semicolon if the conjunction is omitted. Compound sentences can be short or long, but they do not contain a subordinate clause. Here are several examples with the verbs underlined twice and the subjects once and the *coordinating conjunction* italicized:

1. Rashonda sleeps deeply, *but* she only gets 6 hours' rest a night.
2. Rashonda sleeps deeply, *but* she only gets 6 hours' rest a night, *and* the lack of sleep leaves her tired.

Sentence 1 has two main clauses with two sets of subjects and verbs. If we wanted to create two separate sentences, we could put a period after *deeply*. Sentence 2 shows a compound sentence with three main clauses.



Stringing too many main clauses together with *and/but* words makes for monotonous reading.

Complex Sentences

Complex sentences are not necessarily any more "complex" (as in complicated) than simple or compound sentences, but they do contain another kind of clause—the subordinate, or dependent, clause (adverb, adjective, or noun). This means that a complex sentence has *one* main clause and *one or more* subordinate clauses and often phrases. In the following examples, the verbs are double-underlined, the subjects are underlined, and the *cue words* are italicized:

1. Ross brings his daughter to class with him *when* her school is closed. (ADVERB CLAUSE)
2. Ross sometimes brings his daughter, *who* is 6, to class with him. (ADJECTIVE CLAUSE)
3. Bringing a child to class in this situation is *what* some students must do. (NOUN CLAUSE)
4. Ross, who loves his daughter, brings her to class with him *when* her school is closed. (ADJECTIVE CLAUSE; ADVERB CLAUSE)

Sentence 1 begins with a main clause and attaches a subordinate adverb clause beginning with *when*. Sentence 2 includes an adjective clause beginning with *who*. Sentence 3 attaches a noun clause, starting with *what*, to the main clause. Sentence 4 shows a complex sentence with several subordinate clauses—in this case, adjective and adverb.



In most cases, no comma is needed to separate an adverb clause placed after a main clause.

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Compound-Complex Sentences

HINT

Cue words are coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and relative pronouns.

The **compound-complex sentence** simply combines the two preceding sentence types, the compound and the complex. This sentence type, then, must have *two or more* main clauses with *one or more* subordinate clauses. As with other sentence types, any clause may include phrases. Notice the following examples with the verbs underlined twice and the subjects once and the *cue words* italicized:

1. MAIN CLAUSE — ADJECTIVE CLAUSE
   Ascension recently learned about "green roofs," which are roofs covered in soil and vegetation, *and* she was intrigued by the idea.
   MAIN CLAUSE

2. ADVERB CLAUSE — MAIN CLAUSE — MAIN CLAUSE
   Because she was interested, Ascension searched the Internet, *and* she soon found out more about green roofs.

3. MAIN CLAUSE — NOUN CLAUSE — MAIN CLAUSE — NOUN CLAUSE
   Ascension discovered *that* green roofs reduce carbon dioxide, provide wildlife habitat, and decrease heating and cooling bills, *so* she wondered *what* cities might be building them.

4. MAIN CLAUSE — ADVERB CLAUSE — NOUN CLAUSE — MAIN CLAUSE — NOUN CLAUSE
   She was pleased *when* she learned *that* her home city of Chicago had the most green roof area, with 1 million square feet planted, *and* she soon found out *that* Chicago has 2 million more square feet planted.

HINT

Remember that the type of sentence depends on the *kind* (main or subordinate) and *number* of clauses it contains. Reviewing the subordinate clause cue words will help you identify the clauses.

Sentence 1 adds an adjective clause to two main clauses, while sentence 2 adds an adverb clause. Sentence 3 shows that there can easily be more than one subordinate clause of the same type, and sentence 4 shows that several kinds of subordinate clauses are often used together in a compound-complex sentence.

ACTIVITY 11.4 WORKING TOGETHER: *Identifying and Writing Sentence Types*

Working in pairs or small groups, read each sentence aloud, underline each clause, and write its name above it (main, noun, adjective, or adverb). In parentheses at the end of the sentence, name the sentence type: simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.

main clause — *main clause noun clause*

EXAMPLE: Keegan is studying to be a marine biologist, but he wonders if he *adverb clause* can survive the math requirement, even though he did well in math in high school. *(compound-complex)*

1. When writers learn some basic sentence grammar, they become more confident in their writing.



2. Wayne looked at the classified ad for telemarketers and wondered whether the $10 an hour would be worth it.

3. Yuja Wang, who is just 20 years old, will be performing this weekend at the Kansas City Symphony, so Kurt and Amber decided to buy tickets.

4. Only 6 percent of U.S. farmers are under 35, but 26 percent are over 65.

5. Ultralight backpackers usually know what they carry to the ounce, and they may trim weight in imaginative ways, such as cutting most of the handle from their toothbrushes.

6. Will the genocide in Darfur continue indefinitely, or will the international community finally act?

7. Hammad Zaidi is a busy producer of children's DVDs yet finds time to visit his former high school, Shawnee Mission South, and mentor students.

8. Write a compound, a complex, and a compound-complex sentence. Underline each clause, and write the name over it (main, adverb, adjective, or noun). Use commas with adverb clauses that begin sentences but not with those that follow main clauses (unless they use *though, even though,* or *although*); divide main clauses with a comma and coordinating conjunction; and set off with commas any nonessential adjective clauses.

   a. Compound:_____

   _____

   b. Complex:_____

   _____

   c. Compound-complex: _____

   _____

   _____



Remember that clauses can be brief, are often embedded within one another, and are set off by commas when they are nonessential but not when essential.

ACTIVITY 11.5 *Identifying Clauses and Sentence Types: Mixed Review*

In this last half of the essay used in Activity 10.9 (pp. 153–154), write the name over each of the underlined clauses that we have worked with in this chapter: *main, noun, adjective*, and *adverb*. Within the parentheses at the end of the sentences, write the sentence type: simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex. The first sentence is marked as an example.

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The Day I Was Shot

(continued from Activity 10.9)

adverb clause *main clause*

When I finally reached my street, my older sister Sissy was sprinting toward me (complex). She swooped me up quickly and carried me home, stumbling the whole way ( ). Sissy tried to call my dad at the office, but he had already left for a meeting ( ). I could tell my sister was scared, too ( ). She didn't know what she should do or how serious my injury was ( ). She finally reached my mom at work, and as she told Mom what had happened, Sissy began crying, which scared me even more ( ).

"Sissy, am I going to die?" I asked, looking up at her from my one good eye.

My sister tried to comfort me as we waited ( ). She used a wet washcloth to clean me up because I was a mess ( ). I had blood in my hair and all over my face and clothing ( ). We waited an excruciatingly long 10 minutes for our mom ( ). It seemed like hours before she finally arrived ( ). My mom had to carry me into the emergency room as I was screaming and crying hysterically ( ). My voice echoed throughout the hospital ( ).

Nurses rushed around, trying to clean me up and stop the bleeding while we waited impatiently for the doctor ( ). A few minutes later the doctor appeared, and after 10 more minutes he had repaired the damage ( ). He had put eight stitches directly below my right eyebrow ( ).

I slept in the car during the drive home, exhausted from the pain and excitement ( ). My dad, older sister, and older brother were waiting on the front porch for me ( ). Everyone asked what had happened; they thought I had fallen off the monkey bars at school ( ). I tried to explain that I had been shot, but no one believed me ( ).

Brian and his mom came over later that evening ( ). His mom talked to my mom while I had to go outside and talk to the boy who had attempted to kill me ( ). "I didn't shoot you, really ( ). I threw a rock," Brian told me, standing on my front porch.

I didn't believe him ( ). I knew he hated me ( ). He always picked on me in class and would never choose me when we played kickball at recess ( ).

"I'm really sorry you had to have stitches," he said, his eyes glued to his feet. "I promise not to pick on you anymore at school. And besides, I'm grounded for two weeks." I couldn't believe it ( ). Brian had actually apologized to *me* ( ). I said, "Yeah, OK, you better not."

Brian looked up from his feet then and kind of half-smiled at me, and about that time his mother came banging through the screen door ( ). She grabbed him by the hand, said good night, and hurried him down the sidewalk ( ). I sat down on the porch swing and felt the spiky stitches under my eyebrow ( ). It had been a terrible day. ( ). I might as well have been shot ( ). But at least there was something there for me ( ).

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I was finally free from Brian, the terror of first grade ( ). I had his word ( ). Sissy came out then and rocked with me for a few minutes ( ). I told her what Brian had promised ( ) She said that maybe it was a win for me ( ). I thought for a while about that, and I remembered how sorry Brian had looked ( ). His apology *had* made me feel a little better ( ). Before we went back inside for the evening, I told Sissy, "Maybe he's not such a dork after all."

—*Angela Currie*

HINT

See Chapter 25 for more on using process analysis. See Chapter 32 for more on sentence variety.



ACTIVITY 11.6 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Phrases and Clauses to Create Variety in Process Descriptions*

If it seems challenging to keep process writing engaging, try varying the types of sentences and clauses you use. Remind your reader that you are not just listing a series of sound-alike steps by changing your sentence patterns and rhythms. Go to pages 387 and 388 and choose a topic from the list; write a paragraph describing that process, and use at least one of each type of sentence: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. When you've completed a draft, trade paragraphs with a classmate and identify the types of clauses and sentences in each other's work. Discuss sentences that might benefit from a different structure.

ACTIVITY 11.7 WORKING ONLINE: *Practicing with Clauses*

For additional practice with clauses, take this interactive quiz on the grammar site *The Tongue Untied:* http://grammar.uoregon.edu/clauses/clausepractice.htm.



ACTIVITY 11.8 WORKING ONLINE: *Clauses and Sentence Parts Review*

Take the Chapter 11 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary: A Writer's Basic Sentence Grammar

Having practiced the basic sentence parts in chapters 10 and 11, you now know how to control sentences. Words (parts of speech) build phrases, phrases grow into or are attached to clauses, and clauses are sentences or are attached to them. Knowing how words work—to express action or state of being, name, describe, or link—you can now confidently revise your sentences to best express your meaning.

The following charts summarize key sentence parts and serve as this chapter's summary:



Practice your sentence variety. Make sure you use a mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences.

WORDS (EIGHT KINDS)

verb	noun	pronoun	adverb
to run, to be	(chair, love)	(she, who, many)	(silently, very, often)
adjective	**preposition**	**conjunction**	**interjection**
(green, strong, foolish)	(to, of, in)	(and, because)	(oh my!)

PHRASES (SIX KINDS)

	Type	Definition	Example
1.	**Prepositional**	Phrase beginning with a preposition and ending with a noun or pronoun—used as an adjective or adverb	*On* the east side of town, the highway is backed up for a mile.
2.	**Infinitive**	Phrase starting with *to* + a base verb—used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb	*To prepare* for her final, Jamie studied till 2:00 a.m.
3.	**Participial**	Phrase beginning with a base verb + an *-ing* or *-d/-ed* or *-n/-t* word—used as an adjective	*Swimming* twenty laps, Carl was just starting his workout.
4.	**Gerund**	Phrase beginning with an *-ing* word—used as a noun	However, *swimming* twenty laps just about killed Carl's brother.
5.	**Absolute**	Phrase starting with a noun followed by a participle (see 3 above)—describes the whole sentence	His nostrils burning with the sharp odor of gas, Al decided not to light the match.
6.	**Appositive**	Phrase that renames a noun or pronoun	Pandas, bamboo-eating *relatives* of bears and raccoons, have become critically endangered due to loss of habitat.



Words that begin prepositional phrases: *to, of, on, near, around, beside, at, by, in, during, about, like,* etc.

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CLAUSES (TWO KINDS)



Words that divide main clauses: *and, but, or, so, yet, nor, for*

	Type	Definition	Example
1.	**Main clause**	Clause with complete thought—stands by itself	*Meerkat Manor* is a popular animal reality show.
2.	**Subordinate clause** (three kinds)	Clause without a complete thought—linked to a main clause	(see the three examples below)
	– Noun	Clause used as subject, object, or complement	*That* some of the animals on *Meerkat Manor* die upsets many viewers.
	– Adjective	Clause that follows and describes a noun or pronoun	The show, *which* has run for three years, is an animal soap opera.
	– Adverb	Clause—usually movable—that describes verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, telling *when, where, why, how,* or *to what extent*	*When* the meerkat Mozart died, fans mourned worldwide.



Common words that begin adjective clauses: *who, which, that*



Common words that begin adverb clauses: *because, as, if, although, since, when, while, after, before, until*

SENTENCES (FOUR KINDS)

	Type	Definition	Example
1.	**Simple**	Sentence with one main clause but no subordinate clause	People save money by conserving energy.
2.	**Compound**	Sentence with two or more main clauses but no subordinate clause	People save money by conserving energy, *and* they reduce pollution.
3.	**Complex**	Sentence with one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses	People save money by conserving energy *when* they use their appliances wisely.
4.	**Compound-complex**	Sentence that combines compound and complex sentences and so must have two or more main clauses and one or more subordinate clauses	People save money by conserving energy *when* they use their appliances wisely, *and* they reduce pollution.



The type and number of clauses identify a grammatical sentence.

Coordination and Subordination

12

[*By dressing in matching uniforms and sharing similar welcoming expressions, these Starbucks employees convey a sense of* ***coordination,*** *of equals working together. Write a paragraph giving several examples of situations when you have coordinated your wardrobe or behavior with others'. What value do you see in having the ability to coordinate?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Coordination
  - Coordinating words, phrases, and clauses
  - Avoiding excessive coordination
- Subordination
  - Subordinating words and phrases
  - Using adverb clauses and adjective clauses
  - Avoiding excessive subordination

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Chapters 10 and 11 focus on sentence parts: what they are and how they work. This chapter takes us one step further, helping you understand the important role coordination and subordination play in ordering the ideas in a sentence.

Not everything writers tell readers has equal weight, so we need to signal when the audience should pay special attention to a particular point. Balance in sentences depends on the following relationships:

- **Coordination** gives roughly *equal weight* to ideas.
- **Subordination** *stresses one idea* while deemphasizing another.

Chapter 12 will show you how to use each of these strategies in your writing.

Coordination



Take care not to use the words *now* and *then* as coordinating conjunctions.

Coordination in writing balances sentence parts through the use of coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, or, so, yet, for, nor*).

Coordinating Words

In the following sentence, *and* coordinates the two words *paper* and *pencil:*

Russ needs some paper *and* a pencil.

The two items are equally important, as in this example:

Aidan *or* Olivia will give the presentation.

Coordinating Phrases

Liang-May will stop to get gas *and* to buy doughnuts.

The infinitive phrases beginning with *to get* and *to buy* are joined by the word *and.* We can also link two prepositional phrases, as in the following example:

She should be in the garage *or* in the kitchen.



Generally use a comma before a coordinating conjunction that links two main clauses in a compound sentence.

Coordinating Clauses

Few of us have problems linking words or phrases; however, clauses can be more difficult. When we coordinate sentences with two or more main clauses—unless the clauses are very short—we should use a comma before the coordinating conjunction, as in the following examples:

1. Naan flatbreads are traditionally served with Indian or Asian cuisine, *but* naan can be used in place of bread for just about anything.
2. Wal-Mart must change its approach to the U.S. market, *or* the super chain will continue to lose business to Target.
3. Continued exposure to loud music can cause hearing loss, *so* many band members from groups in the sixties and seventies are now hearing impaired.

It is important to choose the conjunction that best expresses the relationship you want to show between main clauses. While *yet* and *but* are often interchangeable, none of the other coordinating conjunctions are. For example, using *and, or, so, for,*

or *nor* in place of the *but* in sentence 1 would confuse readers. Coordinating conjunctions can show the following types of relationships:

USES OF COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

- ***and:*** to show agreement or addition, meaning "also"
- ***but, yet:*** to show disagreement or contrast, meaning "however"
- ***or:*** to show alternatives, meaning "either"
- ***so:*** to show cause, meaning "therefore"
- ***for:*** to explain why, meaning "because"
- ***nor:*** to exclude, meaning "neither"

Sometimes, instead of using a coordinating conjunction, we can show coordination with a *semicolon*:

The two were separated; they were not divorced.

The semicolon can also be used with a **conjunctive adverb** such as *however, therefore, nevertheless, in fact,* or *consequently*. Conjunctive adverbs add emphasis or a small bit of explanation, as shown in the following sentence:

The two were separated; *however,* they were not divorced.

Note the semicolon before and comma after *however*.

Avoiding Excessive Coordination

Although coordination is an important method for communicating ideas, writers should be careful not to overuse coordinating conjunctions—in particular, *and*. Compare the following two paragraphs. Which seems more readable?

1. Carbon dioxide levels are increasing in the earth's atmosphere, *and* more of the sun's heat is trapped, *and* it is radiated back to the surface, *and* this is gradually raising the Earth's temperature, *and* there is little debate anymore about the rise in temperature, *and* there are some who still maintain that this rise is naturally occurring *and* not caused by people, *and* because it is a natural process, we shouldn't worry about it, *and* if we do forget about it, they claim the planet will take care of itself as it has always done, *and* therefore people shouldn't feel guilty about the whole global warming issue.

2. Carbon dioxide levels are increasing in the earth's atmosphere as more of the sun's heat is trapped. The heat is radiated back to the surface, gradually raising the Earth's temperature. There is little debate anymore about the rise in temperature. *But* there are some who still maintain that this rise is naturally occurring, not caused by people, *and* that because it is a natural process, we shouldn't worry about it. If we do forget about it, they claim the planet will take care of itself as it has always done; therefore, people shouldn't feel guilty about the whole global warming issue.

All the ideas in these paragraphs are the same; however, paragraph 2 is more readable because the nine *and*s have been trimmed to one, a *but* has been added to show a more accurate relationship between ideas, and several other methods of joining sentences have helped to replace the overused coordinating conjunction.

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ACTIVITY 12.1 *Linking Main Clauses with Coordinating Conjunctions*

Choose the best coordinating conjunction for the following sentences, and write it in the space provided.

EXAMPLE: This is an election year, __so__ the country can expect a good deal of talk about change.

1. Not all children who play with matches start fires, _____ apparently a boy did start one of the fires that roared through southern California this summer.
2. Argentina has a new president, _____ the country hopes to continue its economic growth with her as its leader.
3. Zelda refused to go to the circus, _____ was she willing to take the kids to the parade.
4. Pirate attacks are increasing, especially off Africa's west coast, _____ ship captains are taking extra precautions.
5. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial commemorates the 58,256 American soldiers who died in the war, _____ those who visit the memorial reflect on the terrible cost of war.
6. Allen was nervous but didn't want to leave the slasher film, _____ he thought his friends would laugh at him if he did.
7. Tiffany knew that she had to finish her report, _____ she would not be able to go to the lake.
8. Write three sentences that use a coordinating conjunction between two *main* clauses. Be sure to use a comma before the conjunction.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

ACTIVITY 12.2 *Combining Sentences Using Coordination*

Read through the following paragraphs, and fill in each blank with a coordinating conjunction that makes sense to you.

Requiescat in Pace

We should put aside for a moment the question of who or what is primarily responsible for global warming _____ instead focus on its results. It is clear that we are headed for a planet-wide disaster, _____ people must realize the urgency of the situation—and quickly. As the ice sheets melt worldwide, the ocean level will rise _____ creep up over the coastal plains, drowning some of the world's largest cities. Hurricanes will continue to worsen. Deserts will become swamps, _____ wetlands will become deserts. Arid areas around the world, such as the U.S. Southwest, will become unlivable, _____ animals unable to adapt to this rapid climate

change will become extinct. People will migrate on a massive scale, _____ they will die as their homelands become uninhabitable. When the migrants try to move into territory controlled by others, there will be war. Resources needed to sustain life will become more limited, _____ people will still need them. Civilization as we know it will end, _____ this does not mean the end of the planet.

What global warming means is the end of world dominion by Homo sapiens, _____ the remnant of humanity will no longer be rulers. Their lives will resemble those of our far-flung ancestors, one small, struggling species trying its best to stay alive from season to season. Perhaps, after a time, human beings will repopulate a far different planet, one with new species adapted to a new world, _____ perhaps in this fragile new world, human beings will finally realize that they must care for what little space they have, _____ truly, there is no other place to go.

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Subordination

Coordination helps with clarity and sentence variety, but coordination alone is not enough to create readable prose. When writers add **subordination**, however, they not only add variety to their sentences but help the reader see which ideas to pay the most attention to.

Subordinating Words

We can subordinate single words, as in the following sentence:

Yawning, Arlene struggled to stay awake.

Subordinating Phrases

We might instead subordinate phrases, as in the following sentences:

1. Yawning behind her book, Arlene struggled to stay awake for the last hour of class.
2. At the bottom of the hill, just up from my house, you will find a terrific bakery.
3. Orlando Bloom, the elf Legolas in the *Lord of the Rings* films, first auditioned for the role of Faramir.

Each of the underlined phrases above adds useful information to the sentences, but the main thought is reserved for the main clause. For instance, in sentence 3 the writer uses a subordinate phrase to remind readers that Bloom played the character Legolas in the movies, but the most important point is Bloom's auditioning for the other role.

Using Adverb Clauses

We also often subordinate whole clauses that function as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. The **adverb clause** (beginning with words like *because, if,* and *although*)

in particular helps to show how ideas relate within sentences. Notice how the example that follows leaves the reader to make the cause-and-effect connection:

> Tywon is worried about child care costs. His day care center just raised its hourly rate.

If we subordinate the second sentence by adding the conjunction *because*, the cause-and-effect relationship becomes clear:

> Tywon is worried about child care costs *because* his day care center just raised its hourly rate.

Adverb clauses function like single adverbs, answering the questions *why, when, where, how*, and *to what extent* or *degree* something was done. Why was Tywon worried? Because his day care center had raised its rates.

When beginning sentences with adverb clauses—unless they are very short—set the clause off with a comma. However, when the adverb clause follows the main clause, we usually do not use a comma (except with the subordinating conjunctions *although, though,* and *even though)*. Here are several examples:

1. *Because* his day care center just raised its hourly rate, Tywon is worried about child care costs.
2. *If* the bus does not arrive on time, Jessica will be late.
3. *When* we get to the used car lot, let me do the talking. (comma needed)
4. Let me do the talking *when* we get to the used car lot. (no comma needed because the adverb clause follows the main clause)

Below is a list of subordinating conjunctions that begin adverb clauses. As with coordinating conjunctions, you should choose the subordinator that accurately conveys your meaning. Often, several choices will work equally well. For example, we could say, "*Because* (*Since* or *Now that*) everyone is here, we will begin."



For more on adverb clauses, see Chapter 11.

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: ADVERB-CLAUSE CUE WORDS

after	because	in order that	than	when
although	before	now that	that	whenever
as	even if	once	though	where
as if	even though	rather than	till	whereas
as long as	if	since	unless	wherever
as though	if only	so that	until	while

ACTIVITY 12.3 *Subordinating with Adverb Clauses*

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with clauses that work with the given subordinating conjunction. To be sure you have written a subordinate clause, underline the verb in each subordinate clause twice and the subject once.

EXAMPLE: Wherever *you decide to host the party*, be sure to let me know.

1. When _____, it will be a shocker!
2. The offense was doing well until _____.
3. Although _____, Brian still cares a great deal for her.

4. Heather bought an electric lawnmower so that _____
_____

5. Yuki finally stopped telling all her friends about her IRS audit because _____.

6. After _____, the temperature drops rapidly.

7. If _____, its oil wealth will be exploited and its people left in even deeper poverty.

8. Write three sentences that contain an adverb clause. In the adverb clause, underline the verb twice and the subject once.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____



Remember to use a comma only to set off adverb clauses that *begin* sentences—unless the clause uses *although*, *though*, or *even though*.

Using Adjective Clauses

Almost as useful as adverb clauses for subordinating ideas within sentences are **adjective** (relative) **clauses**, which generally begin with the relative pronouns *who, which,* or *that*. While adverb clauses work as adverbs (telling *when, why, where, how,* and *to what degree* or *extent*), adjective clauses work as adjectives, meaning that they describe nouns and pronouns, answering the questions *which one; how many;* and *what kind, shape, color, texture,* or *condition*. We use *who* to refer to people and *which/that* to refer to objects, ideas, and animals.

Adjective clauses help compress information, making sentences more economical and fluid. They may be *essential* or *nonessential* to the meaning of a sentence. Here are several examples:



For more on essential versus nonessential adjective clauses, see Chapter 11.

NONESSENTIAL ADJECTIVE CLAUSES

1. Many United States citizens think of Africa as a single country. ~~Africa~~ is actually a continent with fifty-three nations.

2. Many United States citizens think of Africa, which is actually a continent with fifty-three nations, as a single country.



Nonessential clauses require commas.

Sentence 2 eliminates repetition of the word *Africa* and replaces it with the pronoun *which* to create the nonessential adjective clause. The *which* clause subordinates the information about Africa being a continent, shifting the writer's emphasis to the misperception by people that Africa is a country.

3. Ronald Reagan assured the working class in the 1980s that wealth would "trickle down" to them. ~~Reagan~~ was the nation's fortieth president.

4. Ronald Reagan, *who* was the nation's fortieth president, assured the working class in the 1980s that wealth would "trickle down" to them.

Sentence 4 supplies useful but not essential information about Reagan being the fortieth president, instead focusing the reader's attention on the theory of "trickle-down" economics.

Since neither of the underlined adjective clauses in sentences 2 and 4 is essential to the meaning of the main part of the sentence, the clauses are enclosed with commas.



Essential clauses do not use commas.

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ESSENTIAL ADJECTIVE CLAUSES

1. The man is my father. ~~The man~~ is kneeling by the fountain.
2. The man *who* is kneeling by the fountain is my father.

Sentence 2 replaces the words *the man* with the relative pronoun *who* (referring to a person), which begins the adjective clause describing *the man*. If you imagine that there could be several men close by, then it is clear that the reader or listener needs the description of a "kneeling man" to identify who among the men is the father.

3. The hot air balloon is ahead in the race. ~~The hot air balloon~~ is covered with stars.
4. The hot air balloon *that* is covered with stars is ahead in the race.

Sentence 4 replaces the second *hot air balloon* with the relative pronoun *that* (referring to an object), which begins the adjective clause describing *hot air balloon*. Without the clause "that is covered with stars," we can't know which balloon is winning the race. Both of the underlined adjective clauses above are essential to the meaning of the main part of the sentence, so they are *not* enclosed with commas.

ACTIVITY 12.4 *Subordinating with Adjective Clauses*

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with an appropriate adjective clause. The subject of each of these clauses is the relative pronoun (*who/which/that*) that begins it. Double-underline the verb that must be included in each clause.



Note that commas are used to set off nonessential clauses but not essential clauses.

EXAMPLE: My parents, *who moved to Texas recently*, are coming to visit.

1. Warren Buffet is the billionaire investor _____.
2. In the twenty-first century many people have come to rely on their computers, _____.
3. Arnold Schwarzenegger is the California governor_____ _____.
4. The light bulb, _____, has been both a blessing and a curse, allowing people to extend their day far into the night.
5. Meryl Streep, _____, has had a long and distinguished acting career.
6. The iPhone has changed the cell phone market; now everyone wants a phone _____.
7. Stephen King, _____, has appeared as an actor in a number of his film adaptations.
8. Write three sentences containing adjective clauses beginning with one of the following relative pronouns: *who* (to refer to people), *which*, or *that* (to refer to object, ideas, and animals). In the adjective clause, underline the verb twice and the relative pronoun subject once.



Remember to use a comma to set off nonessential adjective clauses.

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____

Avoiding Excessive Subordination

As with overcoordination, oversubordination can be too much of a good thing. Sometimes we put more ideas into a sentence than the reader can sort out. When this happens, writing becomes overly dense and hard to understand. The easy solution to the problem is simply to "unpack" a few of the sentences, often by splitting them into two or even three parts. Here is an example of overly subordinated writing followed by a revision (subordinating words are italicized):

DRAFT

When people become concerned about their effect on the environment, *which* is happening more and more frequently, many of them begin to wonder about the cleaning products *that* they are using in their homes, products *that* include commercial cleaners *that* are to a greater or lesser extent environmentally unfriendly and toxic to humans as well, *namely,* chlorine, ammonia, phosphates, and alkyphenol ethoxylates, *which* are harmful to people *as well as* animals *when* the chemicals run down the drain; but one solution to this problem is to use natural cleaning agents, such as white vinegar, lemon juice, and baking soda for surface cleaning, scouring tough stains, or cleaning windows *because* these substances are nontoxic substitutes, just a few of many *that* you can use in keeping your house clean.

REVISION

When people become concerned about their effect on the environment, many wonder about their home cleaning products. Most commercial cleaners are environmentally unfriendly and toxic to humans as well. For example, chlorine, ammonia, phosphates, and alkyphenol ethoxylates are all harmful to people. Animals also suffer *when* these chemicals run down the drain. One solution to this problem is to use natural cleaning agents for surface cleaning, scouring tough stains, or cleaning windows. White vinegar, lemon juice, and baking soda are just a few of the nontoxic substitutes *that* you can use to keep your house clean.

Notice that aside from being clearer, the revision is also shorter and more concise than the draft, without having sacrificed any ideas from the original.



ACTIVITY 12.5 WORKING TOGETHER: *Reducing Excessive Coordination and Subordination*

Working as a group or in pairs, revise this paragraph on a separate sheet of paper to reduce—but not eliminate—both coordination and subordination; your goal is to make the paragraph more readable. As you rewrite sentences, you may have to cut unneeded words, but keep all main points from the original. Read the revised passage out loud.

Yes, I Voted!

Your vote is important in a democracy, and when you cast your ballot, you can feel confident that you have done your duty and that your vote will count toward electing the politician who you think is most likely to serve the best interests of the country, right? Wrong, maybe. After the mess in the presidential election of 2000, which was complete with hanging chads, misplaced ballots, and ballots that simply disappeared, Washington promised reform of the voting procedure so that elections at all levels would be credible and so that citizens would regain confidence that their votes were being properly recorded and that election results would be fair, and so the country moved toward electronic voting machines that did not rely on paper but rather on computer programming to record and



Look for subordinating conjunctions (*because, if, when,* etc.), relative pronouns (*who, which, that*), and coordinating conjunctions (*and, but*), to signal which sentence parts to focus on.

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compile votes. What could be simpler? Voters were given a large simple touch screen with clear instructions, so that would take care of the paper problem, but it has not been working out as planned because computers do not always work properly—programs record votes inaccurately, and sometimes the machines simply lose a few or many votes, which calls into question the outcome of the election, and this confusion is exactly what the new electronic machines were supposed to remedy. The real solution to voting accountability seems to be requiring a paper trail to accompany electronic votes and manual counting of these votes to be sure that they tally, yet as of 2008, only 15 states require this procedure. Because congressional and presidential elections are the underpinnings of our democracy, citizens who care about their country, or who just want to be sure that their efforts at the polling booths are rewarded, should insist that their government do a better job of recording their votes and ensuring that the democratic process is truly served.



For more on comparing and contrasting, see Chapter 26.



ACTIVITY 12.6 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Using Coordination and Subordination to Compare and Contrast***

Coordination and subordination are important tools when writing comparison/contrast paragraphs and essays. Choose a topic from the list on pages 387–388 and explore it in several sentences, using coordination. Now try to express a similar idea using subordination. Which is more effective and why? After you've written a full paragraph about the topic, trade drafts with a classmate and underline all subordinate sentence parts in your partner's paragraph.



ACTIVITY 12.7 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Coordination and Subordination Review***

Take the Chapter 12 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

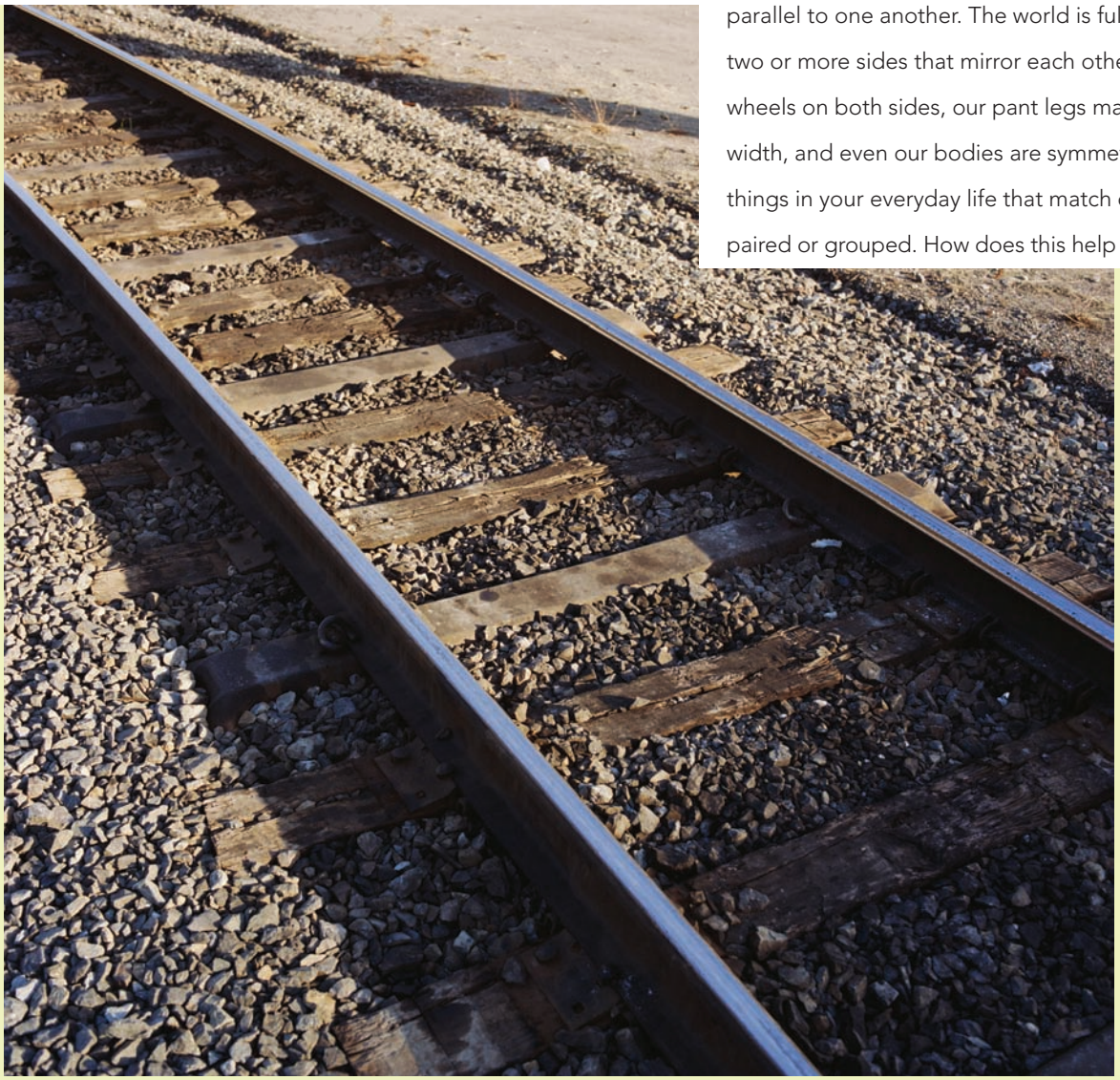
Chapter Summary

1. Coordination in writing balances sentence parts through the use of coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, or, so, yet, for, nor*).
2. Main clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction require a comma to separate them.
3. Coordinating conjunctions express different relationships between sentence parts.
4. Excessive coordination makes writing monotonous.
5. Subordination emphasizes one sentence part over another.
6. Subordinating conjunctions (examples: *because, if, when*) usually signal adverb clauses, which are set off by a comma when the clause begins a sentence but usually not when the adverb clause follows the main clause.
7. Adjective clauses are subordinate word groups and may be essential (requiring no comma) or nonessential (requiring a comma) and frequently begin with the relative pronouns *who, which,* and *that*.
8. Excessive subordination makes writing difficult to understand.

Parallelism

13

[From beginning to end, the rails of this railway track run parallel to one another. The world is full of structures with two or more sides that mirror each other: our cars have wheels on both sides, our pant legs match in length and width, and even our bodies are symmetrical. Write a list of things in your everyday life that match or line up when paired or grouped. How does this help them to function?]



KEY TOPICS

- Making series parallel
- Making lists and outlines parallel
- Making pairs parallel

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Chapter 12 introduced the concepts of coordination and subordination for ordering ideas in a sentence. Another way writers use structure to help readers understand meaning in a sentence is through **parallelism,** a form of coordination that repeats similar grammatical units or structures for clarity and emphasis. The words may be in a series, list, or pair. Groupings of three or more items use commas between them and a coordinating conjunction like *and* or *but* before the last item. Words or word groups in a pair are separated by a coordinating conjunction. In Chapter 13, you will learn to edit your writing for parallelism.

Making Series Parallel

Items in a **series** should be similar grammatical units—nouns following nouns, verbs following verbs, phrases following phrases, and so forth. (In sentence 4, *water skiing* is a two-word gerund, parallel with *hunting* and *fishing*.) Here are some examples:

1. Will you remind me to buy cupcakes, ice cream, potato chips, and soda for the party? (nouns)
2. Evan collects, studies, and sells old sixties memorabilia. (verbs)
3. Nona is thoughtful, responsible, caring, and intelligent. (adjectives)
4. Hunting, fishing, and water skiing are a few of Carla's favorite pastimes. (gerunds)

Notice that it would be a lapse in parallelism if we wrote in sentence 3: "Nona is thoughtful, responsible, caring, and *is* intelligent." Adding the verb throws off the series. It would also be nonparallel to rewrite sentence 4 as "Hunting, fishing, and *to water ski* are a few of Carla's favorite pastimes." Using the gerund *skiing* instead of the infinitive *to ski* solves the structure problem.

We can also write parallel phrases, as in the following examples:

5. The United States is supposed to have a "government *of* the people, *by* the people, and *for* the people." (prepositional phrases)
6. Credit card companies want you *to have* their cards, *to use* their cards, and *to pay* monthly finance fees on unpaid balances. (infinitive phrases)
7. *Dumping* 3 feet of snow, *choking* the roadways, and *leaving* people without power for days, the blizzard devastated Sioux Falls. (participial phrases)

Notice that slight variations in parallel structure are fine, as in sentences 6 and 7. For example, the last infinitive phrase in 6 differs from the others by not using *their*, using modifiers before *fees*, and including an additional prepositional phrase, *on unpaid balances*; but overall, the series is parallel, consisting of three infinitive phrases. Generally, the addition of modifiers or prepositional phrases does not affect the parallel structure of a series of participial or infinitive phrases.

Here is an example of parallel clauses:

8. Arlene said, "I give to charities *because* I can, *because* it makes me feel good, and *because* it's the right thing to do."

Although slight differences in parallel forms are typical in writing, you should avoid the following kind of nonparallel constructions:

Nonparallel: Dan needs *to go* to the hardware store, *to stop* at the bank, and he thinks he might make it to the library before it closes.

English Review Note

In a series of infinitives, subsequent *to*s may be omitted because they are implied by the first.

Parallel: Dan needs *to go* to the hardware store, *to stop* at the bank, and *to make* it to the library before it closes. (three parallel infinitive phrases)

Parallel: Dan needs *to go* to the hardware store and *(to) stop* at the bank, and he thinks he might make it to the library before it closes. (parallel pair and a separate main clause)

ACTIVITY 13.1 *Seeing Parallelism in Series*

Underline the parallel series in each of the following sentences, and check them for correct parallel form. In each, cross out the faulty word group, and write the parallel form above it.

EXAMPLE: Diamonds are judged by cut, color, clarity, and ~~how many~~ carats ~~there are~~. *number of carats*

1. The Sun's major satellites are now divided into the following categories: terrestrial planets, gas giants, moons, and some are called dwarf planets.
2. Genetic researchers have found a way to weaken cancer cells, to reduce their number, and are keeping them from spreading.
3. In many rain forests, miners, loggers, and those who want to conserve the land continue to compete fiercely over the use of land still inhabited by indigenous peoples.
4. To learn more about its rich biological history, its distinct ecosystems, and how diverse its species are, scientists are trying to catalog all life in the Pacific Ocean.
5. The NASCAR racer slid in an oil slick, began to fishtail, spun around four times, and to crash into the wall of the track.
6. Snorting and bellowing, blowing froth from its lips, and as it stamped its hooves, the Brahma bull charged out of the chute with its rider hanging on tightly.
7. Becky saw that she would have to learn quickly about cleaning the floors, stocking the shelves, and how to balance her cash drawer.

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8. Write three sentences that use a parallel series (three or more items). Look to the preceding examples for help.

   a. Single-word series:_____

   b. Phrase series:_____

   c. Phrase series:_____

Making Lists and Outlines Parallel

Related to items in a series are lists and outlines. All **lists** and **outlines** should be in parallel form, using single words or phrases (of the same grammatical type) or full sentences. People often jot quick lists that are not parallel. Which items in the following list seem out of synch with the others?

1. Gas up the car.
2. Dog food.
3. Go to Whole Foods for groceries.
4. Pick up Lauren from school.
5. Gym shoes for Lauren.
6. Return Ginny's jacket to Martha (thank them both).

Items 2 and 5 lack verbs and so break the parallel form of the list. Parallelism can be restored simply by adding verbs: 2: *Stop* for dog food. 5: *Buy* gym shoes for Lauren.

As with informal lists, outlines should be parallel. Perhaps the two most common lapses in structure are mixing phrase types and mixing phrases with sentences in the same outline. Note how the parallelism problems (in color) are fixed in the following outline:

DRAFT OUTLINE (FAULTY PARALLELISM)	REVISED OUTLINE (CORRECT PARALLELISM)
I. History of Belize	I. History of Belize
A. During the Maya civilization	A. Maya civilization
B. Western Europeans arrive.	B. Western Europeans
C. Belize breaks with British rule.	C. Belizean independence
II. Geography of Belize	II. Geography of Belize
A. Mountains	A. Mountains
B. Coastal plains	B. Coastal plains
C. Ocean and barrier reef	C. Ocean and barrier reef

In the draft outline, point A is a prepositional phrase, while points B and C are complete sentences. We could rewrite the outline with complete sentences, but the simplest solution is to follow the pattern in part II of the outline by changing A, B, and C into a series of nouns.



ACTIVITY 13.2 WORKING TOGETHER: *Seeing Parallelism in Lists*

In pairs or small groups, revise the following list to correct the faulty parallel structure. Decide which pattern to use, phrase or sentence, and then rewrite the nonparallel points in the second column.

To-Do List

Outline Draft	Outline Revision
1. See if my last check cleared.	1.
2. Go have my cavity filled.	2.
3. Amy for a movie?	3.
4. No more ice cream!	4.
5. Report due for Brannan's class.	5.
6. Put Netflix DVD in mail.	6.
7. Apartment a mess—aggh!	7.
8. Beg for a shift change.	8.

Making Pairs Parallel

Another common form of parallelism is **pairing**. Rather than listing points in a series, we balance two items, usually with a coordinating conjunction. Single words, phrases, and clauses can all be paired, as in the following examples:

1. Ben spends his free time jogging *and* biking. (paired gerunds)
2. Sal raised his glass *and* took a sip. (paired verbs)
3. You will probably find the video game in the top drawer *or* under your bed. (paired prepositional phrases)
4. Consumers are shocked at the price of oil, *but* oil companies are overjoyed at the windfall in profits. (paired main clauses)

Notice that sentence 4 is a compound sentence linking two main clauses that mirror one another in grammatical structure: subject, linking verb, complement, and two prepositional phrases. When clauses are paired this way, the sentence is said to be *balanced*, the parallelism emphasizing ideas in each clause.

We can also use a word group called **correlative conjunctions** (shown in the chart below) to pair ideas.

CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS

both . . . and	just as . . . so	not only . . . but also
either . . . or	neither . . . nor	whether . . . or



Correlative conjunctions require commas when used between two clauses.

These paired conjunctions always appear in the same order; we would not, for example, write "I like *and* cake *both* ice cream." Here are several example sentences:

1. Some voters believe that *neither* the Republicans *nor* the Democrats care much about fulfilling campaign promises.
2. Airport security inspected *not only* Masood's carry-on bag *but also* his checked luggage.
3. "Look, sir, *whether* you make the flight, *or* you don't, it's not our problem," said the agent, tearing Masood's suitcase apart.
4. *Either* we will go to dinner, *or* we will go to the movie.

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Sentences 1 and 2 show correlative conjunctions used *within* a clause, and sentences 3 and 4 show these conjunctions used *between* two clauses.

Correlated pairs require parallel structure just as series, lists, and pairs separated by a coordinating conjunction do. Note the following nonparallel examples, 1 with an unneeded subject and verb, *it was*, and 2 missing the infinitive *to gain*.

1. **Nonparallel:** The corner drugstore was *both* well stocked, *and* it was cheap.

   Parallel: The corner drugstore was *both* well stocked *and* ~~it was~~ cheap.

2. **Nonparallel:** She wanted *not only* to live a wealthy lifestyle *but also* her wealth without working.

   Parallel: She wanted *not only* to live a wealthy lifestyle *but also* to gain her wealth without working.

Not every word needs to be included in a grammatical pairing or list; in fact, leaving words out at the front of phrases and clauses can help with variety and economy, as shown in the following examples:

1. The subprime lending crisis was brought on by property appraisers, (by) local lenders, and (by) mortgage companies buying and selling loans that all of them knew were, at best, risky investments.
2. The people of Sudan, (of) Chad, and (of) Somalia are undergoing incredible hardships while much of the international community ignores them.
3. Bethany wrote a letter of protest to her governor, (her) House representative, and (her) state senator.
4. Darryl feels that his voice counts, (that) his life has meaning, and (that) his goals will be realized.

Note that in sentence 2 above, it would be incorrect to write "of Sudan, of Chad, and Somalia," dropping the final *of*. If you commit to the first two *of*s, you must finish the series using *of*.

Deciding whether to include the words in parentheses above is a question of style. Repetition often helps emphasize a point, and some people might find, for example, that sentence 4 above is more forceful with the *that*s left in.

ACTIVITY 13.3 *Seeing Parallelism in Pairs*

Underline the parallel pairs in each of the following sentences, and check them for correct parallel form. If the sentence is correct, put a *C* in the space provided; if not, cross out the faulty word group and write the parallel form above it, adding any missing words if needed.

EXAMPLE: staying

___ Zach's problems were getting to work on time and ~~to stay~~ awake after he got there.

1. ___ The classified ad called for vacuuming twice weekly and lawn maintenance.

2. ___ Ricardo wanted not only to win the lottery but also the woman of his dreams.



Look for paired words, phrases, and clauses; and watch for problems using correlative conjunctions.

3. ___ Scott plans to spend the morning working in his garage and in his bath.

4. ___ Seth was interested in playing finger-style guitar and to flat pick.

5. ___ My friends from Eugene couldn't decide where to turn off the highway or to find their way back on.

6. ___ Vijay's iPod is either on his desk or his glove compartment.

7. ___ Rachel had a weakness for getting herself into trouble but a talent for getting herself out.

8. Write three sentences that use pairs in parallel form. Look to the preceding examples for help.

   a. Single-word pair:_____

   b. Phrase pair:_____

   c. Phrase pair with correlative conjunctions:_____

   _____

ACTIVITY 13.4 *Seeing Parallelism: Mixed Review*

After reading the following essay, circle coordinating and correlative conjunctions. Next, underline any incorrect parallel structures and then cross out and/or add words to correct the errors. Then correct lapses in parallelism in the outline that follows. The first paragraph has been marked as an example.

Home Sweet Home

Our homes are the places we go to feel secure and ~~for~~ to rest from the stresses of everyday living. We expect to be safe there, but are we? All too often people overlook dangers in their homes that may have been there since the foundations were poured. Houses that create obvious problems for people—symptoms like itchy eyes, runny noses, and sore throats—may be suffering from "sick building syndrome." Even when such effects are not obvious, unnoticed homebound toxins may have dangerous long-term impact on the health of the occupants. Here are several of the chief hazards to watch out for in your own home.

Airborne pollutants in the home are a major source of illness and can be clearly seen or hidden. Cigarette smoke is one obvious toxin. If you smoke, avoid doing so in the house. Second-hand smoke puts those you

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love at risk for respiratory infections, heart, and lung disease. One of the hidden killers is radon. This gas increases the risk of cancer, but the good news is that it is easily and inexpensively tested for, and there are many companies that can lower radon levels in the home. Not only radon but also dealing with asbestos can be a problem for homeowners in homes built before 1978. You are at higher risk of both cancer and getting lung disease from asbestos when remodeling projects expose the old insulation to the air. Allergens can grow in households that are too humid, that have poor air filtration systems, and have had water problems. For example, black mold grows readily under carpets when basements leak. It is not enough to dry the carpet. Either the carpet must be removed (an expensive proposition), or it must be sterilized. Regular strength isopropyl rubbing alcohol will kill the mold before it gets out of hand. To combat other allergens, buy mattress and pillow dust mite covers.

Other nonairborne hazards lurk in many homes. If your house was built prior to 1978, it may well still have lead paint on the walls. While most adults are not in the habit of licking walls or will ingest paint chips, some 900,000 children suffer from lead poisoning annually. Household cleaning products can also be a danger, everything from dishwasher soap to carpet cleaners. Not only house cleaners but also using lawn-care products like herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers are risky, particularly for children and animals.

Finally, many of us neither handle food nor do we store it as safely as we should. Once food has been prepared or a food container has been opened, bacteria begin the decaying process immediately. Keep perishables cool, at least 40 degrees in the refrigerator, and store food as soon after use as possible. A carton of milk left sitting on a counter for an hour will spoil much more quickly than one kept chilled properly. In general, it is a good idea to wash *all* food, including fruits and vegetables, vigorously. Cutting boards used for raw meats are a major source of cross-contamination when they are not cleaned thoroughly.

With all the potential problems the world throws at us every day, we deserve a place that we can count on for rest and safety. But without spending a bit of time to assess our living space, we may get neither relaxation nor find that we have much security. All homeowners should do their best to make their house truly their own "home sweet home."

Scratch Outline

I. Introduce the problem. _____

II. Tell about airborne pollutants. _____

a. Cigarette smoke _____

b. Radon _____

c. Asbestos _____

d. Allergens _____

III. Nonairborne hazards. _____

a. Lead is especially harmful. _____

b. Household cleaning products _____

c. Pesticides _____

d. Contaminated food _____

IV. Reiterate the need to work at a clean and safe house. _____



See Chapter 27 for more on using classification and SOPs.

ACTIVITY 13.5 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Using Parallelism to Classify***

After articulating a single organizing principle (SOP) for classifying items, you will use parallelism to list and describe your categories. Choose a topic from the list on pages 401–402 and explore it in a sentence or two. Draft a full paragraph on the topic; then trade papers with a classmate. On his or her paper, underline all uses of parallel structure, and put an X in the margin next to any non-parallel series, lists, or pairs. Discuss these questions: What is challenging about keeping structure parallel? How might paying attention to this grammatical rule make the content of your writing stronger, too?



ACTIVITY 13.6 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Parallelism Review***

Take the Chapter 13 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



Chapter Summary

1. Parallelism is a form of coordination that repeats similar grammatical units for clarity and emphasis.
2. Items in pairs, series, lists, and outlines should be parallel.
3. Slight variations in parallel structures will not necessarily violate parallel form.
4. Lapses in parallel structure in outlines often occur when phrases are mixed with sentences.
5. A compound sentence in which two main clauses mirror one another in grammatical form is called *balanced*.

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Dealing with Common Sentence Problems

3

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BRANNAN



Run-ons, Comma Splices, and Sentence Fragments

14

[*Flourless peanut butter cookies require only three ingredients. In a paragraph, describe how to make a recipe you love. Anything goes… from heating up frozen pizza to making a soufflé. After working through this chapter, check your paragraph's sentences. Fix any fragments, run-ons, and comma splices.*]









KEY TOPICS

- Identifying run-ons and comma splices
- Fixing run-ons and comma splices
- Identifying sentence fragments (phrases and clauses)
- Fixing sentence fragments

HINT

For more on these sentence parts, see Chapters 3–6, 11, and 12. See Chapter 3 for more on identifying subjects and verbs.

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Like a recipe, a sentence needs certain ingredients—a subject and a verb—to be whole. Think of a **sentence fragment** as a recipe missing vital parts. Peanut butter and sugar need eggs to become a cookie, and a subject needs a verb to function as a sentence. You could compare a **run-on sentence** to two recipes accidentally blended, the peanut butter cookie batter dropped into the same bowl with banana cake batter. A **comma splice** is more like what would happen if the baker tried to separate the two merging batters using only a spoon, an inadequate divider.

Chapter 14 will focus on two common problems in our writing: improperly divided sentences and fragmented (or incomplete) sentences. These errors occur when writers cannot tell where one sentence ends and another begins. The key to controlling run-ons, comma splices, and fragments is determining sentence boundaries. This means locating *verbs* and *subjects* and understanding the difference between *main clauses* and *subordinate clauses*.

As you work through this chapter, make a habit of looking for the **action** (or state of being) **word**(s) in each sentence—the **verb**—and then asking who or what is performing the action—the **subject**.

English Review Note

Learn how sentence boundaries work in English, since they may be different in other languages.

WAYS TO FIX A COMMA SPLICE

1. End punctuation: period, question mark, or exclamation point
2. Comma with a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *so*, *or*, *yet*, *for*, *nor*)
3. Semicolon (;)
4. Subordination: words, phrases, clauses

Run-on Sentences and Comma Splices

If two or more main clauses run together without punctuation between them, this is a **run-on** or **fused sentence**; main clauses require punctuation and/or joining words to separate them. If two main clauses are divided with only a comma, this is a **comma splice**; by itself, a comma isn't strong enough to separate main clauses.

Both kinds of errors can present problems for readers, as in the following examples:

RUN-ON

FIRST MAIN CLAUSE — SECOND MAIN CLAUSE

James Lovelock is a well-known scientist he predicts the death of six billion people from global warming by the year 2100.

COMMA SPLICE

FIRST MAIN CLAUSE — SECOND MAIN CLAUSE

James Lovelock is a well-known scientist, he predicts the death of six billion people from global warming by the year 2100.

When we reach the end of the first main thought with the final word, *scientist*, we need to mark the spot with strong enough punctuation so the reader knows that a new main thought is beginning. We cannot do this with a comma alone, but we can use one of the following four methods.

Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices with End Punctuation

The easiest fix for run-on and comma splice errors is dividing the sentences with a period or other **end punctuation** (such as a question mark or an exclamation point). Below you can see the global warming sentence corrected.

FIXED

FIRST MAIN CLAUSE — PERIOD — SECOND MAIN CLAUSE

James Lovelock is a well-known scientist. He predicts the death of six billion people from global warming by the year 2100.

To decide where to place the period, we have to know how to identify the subjects and verbs in each part of the sentence above, that is, each main clause. In the first sentence we see the linking verb *is* and then ask who or what *is*: the answer is *James Lovelock*. We have the subject and verb. In the second sentence the action verb is *predicts*. Who or what predicts? the pronoun *he* does. We have the next subject and verb. You will usually divide run-on and comma splice sentences close to or just before the subject of a main clause, as in the following example:

INCORRECT: Birth order may determine success or failure in life in some ways firstborn children are often the most successful.

CORRECT: Birth order may determine success or failure in life. In some ways firstborn children are often the most successful.

Remember that fixing run-ons and comma splices depends on your ability to find subjects and verbs. Later in this chapter, we will also learn how to tell the difference between main clauses and subordinate clauses.

ACTIVITY 14.1 *Identifying Run-ons and Comma Splices*

In the following sentences* underline each verb or verb phrase twice and each subject once. Next, separate each sentence with a vertical line, and write *RO* or *CS* in the blank.

EXAMPLE: RO Teddy Roosevelt was an oldest brother and a great success| Elliot Roosevelt was a youngest brother and a depressed alcoholic.

1. ___ Researchers have confirmed some interesting facts about firstborn children, for one they are likely to have a higher IQ than their siblings.
2. ___ The IQ difference is about 3 points from the firstborn to the next the second child will then have an IQ edge over the next born.
3. ___ Another finding is in physical size, firstborns tend to be bigger than their siblings.
4. ___ Also, first children enter more white-collar professions firstborns tend to make more money than their siblings.
5. ___ But life is not necessarily easier or more "fun" for firstborns they often take on more family responsibility than middle or youngest children.
6. ___ Youngest children often learn to manipulate parents and older siblings, last-borns often use humor to achieve this end.
7. ___ Middle children may have the worst birth-order position they miss the sole attention given to the first- and last born.
8. ___ However, a person's life is not necessarily defined by birth order people often defy birth-order stereotypes.

* The information in this activity comes from an article by Jeffrey Kluger in *Time* magazine (Oct. 29, 2007).

Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices with Coordinating Conjunctions

As useful as end punctuation can be for repairing run-ons and comma splices, it is not always the best choice. If dividing sentences with end punctuation

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creates four or five sentences of similar length in a row, your writing will have a choppy feel, as in the example below:

RUN-ON AND COMMA SPLICE

> The United States has only 5 percent of the world's population the United States produces 24 percent of the world's greenhouse gases, some politicians are working hard to reduce global warming, others in the government say, "What global warming?"

REVISED, BUT CHOPPY

> The United States has only 5 percent of the world's population. The United States produces 24 percent of the world's greenhouse gases. Some politicians are working hard to reduce global warming. Others in the government say, "What global warming?"

To avoid this monotonous pattern of sentences, you can instead use a **coordinating conjunction** preceded by a comma.

REVISED USING COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

> The United States has only 5 percent of the world's population, *but* the United States produces 24 percent of the world's greenhouse gases. Some politicians are working hard to reduce global warming, *and* others in the government say, "What global warming?"

Simply using *but* and *and* creates more interesting sentence variety.

When using coordinating conjunctions between clauses, we should be careful to choose those that best express our meaning. For instance, *and* says that the clauses are roughly equivalent and not dependent on each other. *But* and *yet* point out contrast, and *so* shows cause and effect. Notice how we might use these conjunctions in the example below:

> The United States has only 5 percent of the world's population, *but* the United States produces 24 percent of the world's greenhouse gases. *So* some politicians are working hard to reduce global warming, *yet* others in the government say, "What global warming?"

Using *so* shows that some politicians feel obligated to reduce global warming *because* the United States produces such a high percentage of greenhouse gases. Using *yet* (a synonym for *but*) emphasizes the contrast between the politicians' reactions to the global warming issue.

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

and	so	nor
but/yet	or	for



For more on sentence variety, see Chapter 32.



Be careful not to overuse coordinating conjunctions as transitional words to start sentences.



For more on coordination, see Chapter 12.

ACTIVITY 14.2 *Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices with Coordinating Conjunctions*

In the main clauses of each of the following sentences, underline each verb or verb phrase twice and each subject once. Next, write an appropriate coordinating conjunction (and a comma in the case of run-ons) above where the sentences should be divided, and then write *RO* or *CS* in the blank.

EXAMPLE: RO Jennifer Lopez admires the music of Hector Lavoe , and she stars in *El Cantante.*

1. ___ Some countries try to curb terrorism through torture, Saudi Arabia is experimenting with a detention center that uses counseling, classroom lectures, and vocational training to change prisoners' attitudes.

2. ___ Some men are stay-at-home-dads they are becoming closer to their children as a result.

3. ___ People have practiced yoga for 5,000 years, there must be some benefit in it.

4. ___ Having a cat or dog spayed or neutered is a good idea many people are reluctant to do it.

5. ___ Are dog parks just for dogs to socialize are the parks also a good place for people to meet?

6. ___ Radio frequency identification chips are showing up in thousands of consumer products, some have suggested implanting RFIDs in humans for easier tracking.

7. ___ One pair of common house mice can theoretically produce 5,000 descendants in one year, there is a good reason for mice predators.

8. _____ More than 200,000 acres of Southern California have been burned, the winds are dying, the fires may soon recede.

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Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices with Semicolons

A **semicolon** is a strong form of punctuation that can divide two main clauses without the help of a coordinating conjunction. If the main ideas you want to separate are closely related, a semicolon is a good alternative to commas plus coordinating conjunctions for fixing run-ons and comma splices. The thought in the second clause should complete, complement, or add very relevant information to the thought in the first, as in this example:

RUN-ON:

In South America, more women are becoming world leaders Chilean Michelle Bachelet, for example, and Argentinian Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner have recently become presidents.

COMMA SPLICE:

In South America, more women are becoming world leaders, Chilean Michelle Bachelet, for example, and Argentinian Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner have recently become presidents.

FIXED:

In South America more women are becoming world leaders; Chilean Michelle Bachelet, for example, and Argentinian Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner have recently become presidents.

While we could use a period or a comma plus *and*, a semicolon is a reasonable choice since the second main clause completes the statement made in the first clause. These two sentences work as a single unit of thought.

Another option is using a semicolon before a *conjunctive adverb* followed by a comma. Here is an example:

> The movie *Apollo 13* did a great job of simulating floating astronauts; *however*, many of the scenes were actually filmed inside a KC-135 airplane with the actors in free fall.

Notice that we sometimes use the conjunctive adverb *within* rather than between a main clause, in which case we do not use a semicolon:

> The movie *Apollo 13* did a great job of simulating floating astronauts. Many of the scenes, *however*, were actually filmed inside a KC-135 airplane with the actors in free fall.

COMMON CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS

consequently	however	meanwhile	therefore
furthermore	in fact	nevertheless	thus

ACTIVITY 14.3 *Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices with Semicolons*

In the main clauses of each of following sentences, underline each verb or verb phrase twice and each subject once. Next, place a semicolon where appropriate in each sentence. If you find a conjunctive adverb dividing two main clauses, use a semicolon in front of it, and follow it with a comma. Last, write *RO* or *CS* in the blank.

EXAMPLE: *RO* Scientists have discovered two interesting facts about vibrations; when shaken gently for a few minutes daily, people can gain bone mass and lose weight.

1. ___ AARP has an aggressive membership-recruitment campaign, in fact the organization begins soliciting people when they turn 50.
2. ___ *Meerkat Manor* tries to personalize meerkats the animals are given names and spoken of as brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, mothers, and fathers.
3. ___ People are saving energy and helping the planet in many small ways, switching to energy-efficient bulbs is just one example.
4. ___ Nostradamus made many predictions some think he could truly foretell the future.
5. ___ The passport office says that it takes only 12 weeks to process a passport however, it often takes months longer than this.
6. ___ Libertarians believe firmly in one principle, good government is small government.
7. ___ Carrie Underwood got her big break in 2005 on *American Idol* she has since sold millions of albums.
8. ___ Tea is high in antioxidants therefore, it can reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer.

Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices with Subordination

Another way to avoid run-on and comma splice errors *and* help cut unneeded words is to use **subordination.** When subordinating one clause to another, the writer focuses on the idea in the main clause, letting the reader know which idea to pay the most attention to. We most often subordinate by using phrases and clauses.

HINT

Subordination can improve the variety and clarity of writing. See Unit Two (especially Chapter 12).

Subordinating with Phrases

Phrases (word groups that may contain a verb form or a subject, but not both) give writers many options for crafting interesting sentences. If you have not tried most or all of these options, this is a good time to experiment. The six phrases listed below will help solve run-on and comma splice problems and make your writing more interesting.

TYPES OF PHRASES

1. **Prepositional:** preposition + a noun (or pronoun)
   The bowl *on* the table…
2. **Appositive:** a word or words renaming a preceding word
   John, a smart *man*,…
3. **Participial:** *-ing* or *-ed* form of a verb used as an adjective
   Singing in the rain, Tom…
4. **Absolute:** noun (or pronoun) + participle
   The *boat leaving* the dock, we waved…
5. **Gerund:** *-ing* form of a verb used as a noun
   Surfing all day requires…
6. **Infinitive:** *to* + a base verb
   To pass the exam, Preeta studied…

HINT

To review phrases, see Chapter 10.

Below you can see how we might use phrases to fix a run-on/comma splice error. Note how a comma is used to set off word groups at the beginning of main clauses; this application is one of the Big Three comma categories detailed in the next chapter.

RUN-ON:

We are looking forward to summer break school is hard work.

COMMA SPLICE:

We are looking forward to summer break, school is hard work.

PHRASE FIX

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

1. In the months before summer, we work hard in school and so look forward to the break.

APPOSITIVE PHRASE

2. We are looking forward to summer break, a time without hard schoolwork.

PARTICIPIAL PHRASE

3. Working hard all year, we are looking forward to summer break.

HINT

Learn about the Big Three comma categories in Chapter 15 (pp. 214–223).

HINT

Commas are used to set off phrases in sentences 1–4. See Chapters 10 and 15 for more on using commas with phrases.

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No comma is needed with a gerund or infinitive subject, as in 5 and 6.

ABSOLUTE PHRASE

4. Students and faculty working hard all year, we are looking forward to summer break.

GERUND PHRASE

5. Working hard in school makes us look forward to summer break.

INFINITIVE PHRASE

6. To look forward to summer break is natural because school is hard work.

As you write, choose the phrases that sound best within the context of your sentences. If, for example, a participial phrase (like in the preceding example 3) flows better in your paragraph than an absolute phrase, choose the participle. However, remember that using any phrase (or other grammatical unit) repeatedly, without variety, can make writing tedious to read.

ACTIVITY 14.4 *Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices through Phrase Subordination*



Be careful with commas when using subordination.

In the following sentences underline each verb or verb phrase twice and each subject once, and then write *RO* or *CS* in the blank. Next, on the lines provided, rewrite the sentences, subordinating one main clause to the other using any of the six phrase types discussed and modeled above. Write in the parentheses which phrase type you have chosen.

EXAMPLE: *RO* I want a convertible the hot months of July and August are near.
(prepositional phrases) With the hot months of July and August near, I want a convertible.

1. __Some football fans cheer and scream for their favorite teams, these fans go wild watching *Monday Night Football*.

( )

2. __Microbes can be beneficial, they can even affect our emotional states.

( )

3. __ Halloween is a holiday made for kids they love dressing up, being out at night, and getting lots of candy.

( )

4. __The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is considering a partial ban on cold and cough medicines, the ban is to protect children 2 years old and under.

( )

5. __ Tyler spends much of his day opening the refrigerator and clicking the remote, these are Tyler's favorite forms of exercise.

( )

6. __ To escape from the paparazzi is a goal of many famous people they will sometimes wear disguises in public.

( )

7. __ The airline captain was trying to be funny, the pilot asked all passengers to turn off their "cell phones, Blackberries, blueberries, and any other kind of berry."

( )

8. __ Caesar Milan trains the owners as much as the dogs Milan is a specialist in dog behavior problems.

( )



USE WORKBOOK LINES

In many cases, this text provides space to complete writing exercises right here on its pages. You can save paper and practice annotation by using this text as a workbook. For your convenience, the book's pages are perforated and can be torn out and handed in to instructors. ●

Subordinating with Clauses

Subordinate clauses can also solve run-on and comma splice problems. Unlike a phrase, a subordinate clause has both a subject and a verb, but it does *not* contain a complete thought. These incomplete clauses must be attached to a main clause to finish their meaning. There are three types of subordinate clauses, as the following chart shows.

THREE TYPES OF SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

Adverb Common subordinating conjunctions to signal adverb clauses: *after, although, as, because, if, when, where, while*	*When* Ellen comes, the party can…
Adjective Common relative pronouns to signal adjective clauses: *who, which, that*	Jake is the player *who* wouldn't stop talking.
Noun Common cue words to signal noun clauses: *that, what, how*	Victor learned *that* he was sick.



For help punctuating subordinate clauses, review Big Comma Rules 1 and 3 in Chapter 15.



For more on subordinating conjunctions: pp. 161–162. For more on relative pronouns as cue words: pp. 159–160 and p. 164.

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- An adverb clause following a main clause uses no comma (see example 1).
- A nonessential adjective clause requires a comma (see example 2).

RUN-ON

We are looking forward to summer break school is hard work.

COMMA SPLICE

We are looking forward to summer break, school is hard work.

CLAUSE FIXES

ADVERB CLAUSE

1. We are looking forward to summer break because school is hard work.

ADJECTIVE CLAUSE

2. We are looking forward to summer break, which will give us some relief from the hard work of school.

NOUN CLAUSE

3. So much hard schoolwork means that we are looking forward to summer break.

As with phrases, choose the subordinate clause that makes the best sense and sounds best within your paragraph.



Be careful with commas when subordinating clauses.

ACTIVITY 14.5 *Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices through Clause Subordination*

In the following sentences underline each verb or verb phrase twice and each subject once, and then write *RO* or *CS* in the blank. Next, on the lines provided, rewrite the sentences, subordinating one main clause to the other using any of the three subordinate clause types discussed and modeled above. Write in the parentheses which subordinate clause you have chosen.

EXAMPLE: CS Some states can't raise enough money to repair roads, state governments are beginning to sell the jobs to private contractors.

(adverb clause) Because some states can't raise enough money to repair roads, state governments are beginning to sell the jobs to private contractors.

1. __ Many inexpensive products are produced by sweatshop labor, many people are refusing to buy them.

( )

2. __ Dan Wilson has a mellow acoustic guitar sound he has written for the Dixie Chicks.

( )

3. __ Emile was swimming in the waters near Belize, he was stung many times by tiny jellyfish called pica pica.

( )

4. __ In Iceland Yoko Ono has built the Imagine Peace Tower as a memorial for John Lennon and to promote world peace the tower projects a column of light visible for miles.

( )

5. __Amory Lovins has built a very energy-efficient office and home, he will only spend a few dollars a month for power.
( )

6. __ Yesterday Kayla learned some bad news she was responsible for the accident.
( )

7. __Fall is a beautiful season, winter soon closes in on the world.
( )

8. __ A hammock can be a wonderful resting place the hammock must be set up properly.
( )

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ACTIVITY 14.6 WORKING TOGETHER: *Fixing Run-ons and Comma Splices (Mixed Review)*



In the following sentences underline each verb or verb phrase twice and each subject once, and then write *RO* or *CS* in the blank. Next, work with a partner or partners to correct each of the sentences, using *each* of the four methods we have discussed: end punctuation, coordination, semicolon, and subordination (phrases or subordinate clauses).

EXAMPLE: *RO* Flight attendants spend months each year in jets many of them avoid air travel on their weeks off.

Period: *Flight attendants spend months each year in jets. Many of them avoid air travel on their weeks off.*

Coordination: *Flight attendants spend months each year in jets, so many of them avoid air travel on their weeks off.*

Semicolon: *Flight attendants spend months each year in jets; therefore, many of them avoid air travel on their weeks off.*

Subordination: *Because flight attendants spend months each year in jets, many of them avoid air travel on their weeks off.*



Be careful with commas, and check each other's work.

1. __ Some children can't wait to go to preschool others are afraid to leave home.

Period: _____

Coordination: _____

_____

Semicolon: _____

_____

Subordination: _____

_____

2. __ Ashley loves the outdoors her sister Heather loves the mall.

   Period: _____

   Coordination: _____

   Semicolon: _____

   Subordination: _____

3. __ English is still the main language of the United States, there are many other languages spoken here.

   Period: _____

   _____

   Coordination: _____

   _____

   Semicolon: _____

   _____

   Subordination: _____

   _____

4. __ Five-year-old Elaine wanted her grandfather to help her "dig a hole to China," he sighed, got a shovel from the garage, and joined her in the backyard.

   Period: _____

   _____

   Coordination: _____

   _____

   Semicolon: _____

   _____

   Subordination: _____

   _____

   _____

5. __ Sal could reach the bank by 5 o'clock, he could not reach the drugstore by 5 as well.

   Period: _____

   _____

   Coordination: _____

   _____

Semicolon: _____

_____

Subordination: _____

_____

6. __ Many plumbers are well paid for their labor they have a hard and messy job.

Period: _____

_____

Coordination: _____

_____

Semicolon: _____

_____

Subordination: _____

_____

7. __ Ten-year-old Shun Hwa wanted to be a ballerina, she also wanted to be an astronaut.

Period: _____

_____

Coordination: _____

_____

Semicolon: _____

_____

Subordination: _____

_____

8. __ The government of Burma has accepted some international aid many of its people may now be saved.

Period: _____

_____

Coordination: _____

_____

Semicolon: _____

_____

Subordination: _____

_____

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Sentence Fragments

Run-ons and comma splices happen when writers cannot tell where one sentence ends and another begins. For similar reasons we sometimes have difficulty with **sentence fragments**. For a sentence to stand alone, it must have a *verb* and a *subject*,

and it must express a *complete thought*. If a sentence lacks any of these elements, readers usually have trouble understanding it, as in the following examples:

PHRASES	CLAUSES
Slipping into the water	After a few moments had passed
Along the surface	Who was a wildlife specialist
To touch the stingray	Which Jason watered daily
The Crocodile Hunter	Although she knew the answer

None of these examples can stand alone because they lack a finished thought. The sentence fragments in the left-hand column are **phrases**—they lack a subject, a verb, or both. The examples in the right-hand column are **clauses**. They come the closest to being freestanding sentences because they *do* have a subject and verb, but they lack a main clause to complete their meaning.

One reason sentence fragments appear in your writing is that they can look and sound like complete sentences within the context of a paragraph, as in the following example:

FRAGMENTS:

Slipping into the water. Steve Irwin, the Crocodile Hunter, paddled quietly. Along the surface, looking down at the stingrays. After a few moments had passed. Irwin thought that he would try for a closer look. But a moment later tragedy struck. When the ray slashed its barbed tail upward.

FIXED:

Slipping into the water, Steve Irwin, the Crocodile Hunter, paddled quietly along the surface, looking down at the stingrays. After a few moments had passed, Irwin thought that he would try for a closer look. But a moment later tragedy struck when the ray slashed its barbed tail upward.

In most cases, we can fix sentence fragments by attaching them to the sentence that precedes or follows them, often using a comma (as in the corrected Crocodile Hunter example). When this does not work, any missing words—usually subjects or verbs—must be replaced.

The key to dealing with fragments is recognizing *verbs* and *subjects* so you can identify sentence boundaries. The rest of this chapter focuses on the two most common kinds of fragments: phrases and subordinate clauses.

Phrase Fragments

In Unit Two you learned that, by definition, a **phrase** can have a verb form or a noun but not both a verb and a subject. Phrases are sentence fragments and must be attached to a main clause to express their full meaning. There are two ways to fix phrase fragments:

1. Connect the phrases to a main clause.
2. Add words (subjects, verbs, or both) to turn the phrases into main clauses.

As always, when you change the shape of sentences, be careful with comma use. Here are examples of common phrase fragments and two ways to fix them:

Prepositional phrase fragment: The team's practice was difficult. *In* the morning and worse *in* the afternoon.

1. **Fix by attaching:** The team's practice was difficult *in* the morning and worse *in* the afternoon.
2. **Fix by adding words:** The team's practice was difficult. It was bad in the morning and worse in the afternoon.

Infinitive phrase fragment: *To volunteer* with Habitat for Humanity. Rosalyn took a day off from work.

1. **Fix by attaching:** *To volunteer* with Habitat for Humanity, Rosalyn took a day off from work.
2. **Fix by adding words:** Rosalyn wanted *to volunteer* with Habitat for Humanity. So she took a day off from work.

Participial phrase fragment (present tense): *Swearing* several times. My uncle dropped the hammer and shook his injured hand.

1. **Fix by attaching:** *Swearing* several times, my uncle dropped the hammer and shook his injured hand.
2. **Fix by adding words:** My uncle swore several times. Then he dropped the hammer and shook his injured hand.

Participial phrase fragment (past tense): *Stunned* by the loss. Adam collapsed onto the bench.

1. **Fix by attaching:** Stunned by the loss, Adam collapsed onto the bench.
2. **Fix by adding words:** Adam was stunned by the loss. He collapsed onto the bench.

Absolute phrase fragment: The orbiting space station leaking oxygen. The astronauts had to evacuate.

1. **Fix by attaching:** The orbiting *space station leaking* oxygen, the astronauts had to evacuate.
2. **Fix by adding words:** The orbiting space station was leaking oxygen. The astronauts had to evacuate.

Appositive phrase fragment: A magnificent but small raptor. The sparrow hawk eats mice but also grasshoppers.

1. **Fix by attaching:** A magnificent but small raptor, the sparrow hawk eats mice but also grasshoppers.
2. **Fix by adding words:** The sparrow hawk is a magnificent but small raptor. It eats mice but also grasshoppers.

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ACTIVITY 14.7 *Recognizing and Fixing Phrase Fragments*

Fix the following phrase fragments; turn them into sentences by either attaching a phrase to a main clause or adding words to the fragment.

EXAMPLE: Clinging with one bloody hand to the cliff face. Frodo almost fell to his death.

Clinging with one bloody hand to the cliff face, Frodo almost fell to his death.

1. The dinner was ruined. Vegetables turned to mush and pasta covering the stove top. So Beth and her family decided to order pizza.



When you combine the phrase with a main clause, be sure to punctuate correctly. To review punctuating phrases, see Chapters 10 and 15.

2. Diving deep and stripping off line. The big rainbow fought to break free. Using all the power in its strong body.

3. Zachary and his son entered the museum. By the north door on the first floor across from the library.

4. Overcome by joy. Mary Grace had finally added a California condor to her bird watchers' life list.

5. Even though the road out of San Ignacio was awful, the Johnsons promised each other that they would make it. To the Barton Creek Caves.

6. The car stalling again at the intersection. Dan swore he would take it to the shop the next day.

7. A scarlet bird with an unusually long, curved bill. The I'iwi is native only to Hawaii.

8. To keep her household bills in order. Grandma had developed a complex filing system. With five metal drawers filled with folders dating back 50 years.



When you combine the phrase with a main clause, be sure to punctuate correctly.

ACTIVITY 14.8 *Recognizing and Fixing Phrase Fragments*

Underline the phrase fragments in the following passage. Then, fixing each, write a revised paragraph in the space provided. You may fix the fragments either by attaching a phrase to a main clause or by adding words.

Crop circles are a mystery to some. But easily explained by others. Crop "circles" are patterns of various sorts that are sometimes found in wheat fields. Primarily in England but also in the United States and other countries. These designs can be relatively small. Or cover hundreds of feet from start to finish. Explanations can become quite creative. Some say crop circles are caused by explosive downdrafts of wind. A tornado-like footprint on a field. Others say that the military is experimenting with new weapons that leave these marks. Some claim that the symbols are created by aliens who are trying to communicate. With earthlings through them. However, most crop circles

have another explanation. People playing games. Doug Bower and David Chorley, for example, have confessed. To making 250 of these circles over the years. Using a weighted board pulled by a rope. A person can flatten a fairly complex design in a wheat field in a matter of hours. Not all crop circles have yet been explained, but the "mystery" does now seem less mysterious than it once did.

Subordinate Clause Fragments

While sentence fragments are often phrases, they can also be **subordinate clauses**. As we learned in Unit Two, a subordinate clause contains a subject and a verb but not a complete thought. These clauses depend on a main clause to finish the thought that they started.

Subordinate clauses come in three varieties—noun, adjective, and adverb—but the most common fragment problems come from adverb and adjective clauses. To identify **adverb clause fragments**, be alert to this list of common subordinating conjunctions:

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

after	because	in order that	than	when
although	before	now that	that	whenever
as	even if	once	though	where
as if	even though	rather than	till	whereas
as long as	if	since	unless	wherever
as though	if only	so that	until	while

If a sentence begins with one of these conjunctions and is not attached to a main clause, it is a fragment.

There are two ways to fix adverb clause fragments:

1. Attach the adverb clause to the main clause.
2. Drop the subordinating conjunction to create another main clause.

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The following example uses the second approach; note that adverb clauses at the start of sentences require a comma:

Adverb clause fragment: *Because* the winds have died down in southern California. The forest fires are coming under control.

1. **Fix by attaching:** *Because* the winds have died down in southern California, the forest fires are coming under control.
2. **Fix by dropping the subordinator:** The winds have died down in southern California. The forest fires are coming under control.

Adjective clause fragments can usually be identified by one of these three common relative pronouns: *who, which,* or *that*. They can be fixed either by attaching them to the main clause or by dropping the relative pronoun and replacing it with a noun or pronoun as in the example below. Note that nonessential adjective clauses require a comma.

Adjective clause fragment: With 1,731 entrants, the 2007 Ironman World Championship in Hawaii was won by Chris McCormack. *Who* finished the race in a mere 8 hours, 15 minutes, and 34 seconds.

1. **Fix by attaching:** With 1,731 entrants, the 2007 Ironman World Championship in Hawaii was won by Chris McCormack, *who* finished the race in a mere 8 hours, 15 minutes, and 34 seconds.
2. **Fix by dropping the relative pronoun and adding a noun:** With 1,731 entrants, the 2007 Ironman World Championship in Hawaii was won by Chris McCormack. *He* finished the race in a mere 8 hours, 15 minutes, and 34 seconds.

ACTIVITY 14.9 *Recognizing and Fixing Clause Fragments*

HINT

When you combine a fragment with a main clause, be sure to punctuate correctly. To review punctuating clauses, see Chapters 11, 15, and 16.

Decide which of the following sentences are subordinate clause fragments, and then correct the error by attaching a subordinate to a main clause, dropping a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun, or adding words to the fragment.

EXAMPLE: **When I arrived at the party. I saw that it had already gotten out of control.**

When I arrived at the party, I saw that it had already gotten out of control.

1. After the North/South America land bridge formed. Animals and people were able to migrate freely.

2. Although she doesn't like violence. Roxie took a self-defense course at her community center. Because a friend of hers had been attacked while jogging.

3. The NFL is desperately looking for good quarterbacks. Who are in short supply.

4. Since they are non-shedders. Wheaten terriers are being bought by more people. Who want a midsized dog. That does not cover their house in hair.

_____

_____

5. One form of alternative medicine is called crystal therapy. Which is said to balance the chakras. Which are the seven energy centers of the body.

_____

_____

6. Whereas acupuncture uses needles to relieve stress in the body and heal it. Acupressure uses only hands or small blunt instruments to achieve similar results.

_____

_____

7. Jordan spent almost $100 on her Halloween costume. So that she would be the center of attention at Andre's Halloween party.

_____

_____

8. Though Bruce Springsteen did not write much music for 10 years. Since 2005 he has released three new albums.

_____

_____

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ACTIVITY 14.10 *Creating Sentences from Clause Fragments*

Complete the following subordinate clauses with any main clauses that make sense to you.

EXAMPLE: **Because not enough people spay or neuter their dogs and cats,** *7 million unwanted pets are euthanized every year.*

1. Whenever visitors came, _____
2. If everyone would show up on time, _____
3. _____ while the woman in the red sweater looked in through the window.
4. Until Leo slipped and fell in his hallway, _____

   _____
5. _____ when my cousin finally showed up for the wedding.
6. _____ that attaches without much difficulty.
7. _____ because Aaron was there to help.
8. _____ who is the best finish carpenter in the city.



Pay attention to comma use when fixing fragments.

ACTIVITY 14.11 *Fixing Phrase and Clause Fragments (Mixed Review)*

Underline the phrase and clause fragments in the following passage, and then rewrite (or retype) this passage on separate paper (or on the computer). You may fix the fragments by attaching a phrase or subordinate clause to a main clause, dropping a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun, or adding words to the fragment. When you combine phrases and clauses, be sure to punctuate correctly.

Are there aliens among us? Many people believe that beings from another planet or planets have traveled to earth, abducted people for secret experiments, and live here even now. Starting with the supposed government conspiracy to cover up a reported alien crash landing at Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947. True believers say that there have been many attempts by the government. To suppress public knowledge of alien visitations. Some people claim to have been abducted by aliens. Sometimes experimented on or whisked away to another star system. And, of course, there is a vast body of fiction and film. Devoted to the idea of alien visitation.

However, if we consider the vast distance between stars in the Milky Way Galaxy alone. It makes the vision of aliens-next-door seem unlikely. The closest star of any kind is over three light years away. With our current technology, it would take thousands of years to reach even this star. Much less to reach one farther away. That might be earthlike enough to produce a vaguely humanoid life form. The one that seems to be doing all the abducting.

The universe contains so many stars, and probably many with planets. That there is bound to be other life "out there." Maybe intelligent life. But we should ask ourselves several questions. Could they have traveled to Earth ever? Why would they want to secretly spy on earthlings? Even if they could get here. Finally, why, despite all the claims of alien sightings. Has there never been any credible artifact brought forth as evidence of alien visitation?



ACTIVITY 14.12 WORKING ONLINE/WORKING TOGETHER: *Fixing Fragments in Context*

Go to http://www.netlingo.com/emailsh.cfm, and work with a partner or small group to translate twenty-five examples of IM-speak fragments into real sentences. Feel free to be creative. Then check your work, making sure you have avoided comma splices and run-ons.



ACTIVITY 14.13 WORKING ONLINE: *Chapter Review*

Take the Chapter 14 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan to test yourself on identifying and fixing run-ons, comma splices, and fragments.

Chapter Summary

1. Writers can identify and correct run-ons, comma splices, and fragments by determining sentence boundaries: locating *verbs* and *subjects* and distinguishing *main clauses* from *subordinate clauses*.
2. A run-on sentence occurs when two or more main clauses run together without punctuation between them. A comma splice occurs when only a comma connects main clauses; by itself a comma is not strong enough to join them.
3. The easiest way to fix a comma splice or a run-on is to separate the two main clauses with end punctuation, such as a period.
4. Comma splices and run-ons can also be fixed by using commas with coordinating conjunctions, by using semicolons, or by using subordination (phrases or clauses).
5. A sentence fragment is missing either a subject or a main verb; it is an incomplete sentence and does not express a complete thought. Fragments may be phrases or subordinate clauses.
6. To make a phrase fragment into a sentence, either connect it to a main clause or add words (subjects, verbs, or both) to turn the phrase itself into a main clause.
7. To make an adverb clause fragment into a sentence, either attach it to the main clause or drop the subordinating conjunction to create another main clause.
8. To make an adjective clause fragment into a sentence, either attach it to the main clause or drop the relative pronoun and replace it with a noun or pronoun.

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Commas

15

[*In order for traffic to keep flowing smoothly, we need lights, signs, and sometimes police officers to direct it. Commas and other punctuation marks serve a similar purpose in writing. Write a brief paragraph describing your trip to class today. Now remove all the punctuation, and exchange paragraphs with another student. How difficult is it to understand his or her work?*]



KEY TOPICS

- The Big Three comma categories
  - –1 Introducing main clauses
  - –2 Setting off nonessential word groups
  - –3 Dividing main clauses
- Secondary comma categories
- Avoiding unneeded commas

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Getting ideas down on paper in a clear, well-organized way is difficult and time consuming, but once we have finally managed it, we want our readers to be able to follow our points. This is where punctuation—the focus of Chapters 15 and 16—comes in. Periods, commas, semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses, and quotation marks help to separate our ideas into recognizable units of thought so that readers can follow where we are trying to lead them. Without correct punctuation, we end up with paragraphs like the following:

CONFUSING

> One Sunday afternoon in June members of the Spring Hill Choir and I learned how important a map can be when visiting New York City forgetting to set the alarm clock the night before our performance at Carnegie Hall we overslept as sunlight burst through the hotel window we woke up to Bethany yelling guys wake up our performance starts in three hours hurrying to get ready we left the room a disaster dressed in our uncomfortable black dresses we rushed downstairs to the hotel lobby to find our leader Sherry and a few choir members who had stayed behind waiting for us.

However, if we take the time to use punctuation to our advantage, we can make a confusing paragraph clear:

CLEAR

> One Sunday afternoon in June, members of the Spring Hill Choir and I learned how important a map can be when visiting New York City. Forgetting to set the alarm clock the night before our performance at Carnegie Hall, we overslept. As sunlight burst through the hotel window, we woke up to Bethany yelling, "Guys, wake up! Our performance starts in three hours!" Hurrying to get ready, we left the room a disaster. Dressed in our uncomfortable black dresses, we rushed downstairs to the hotel lobby to find our leader, Sherry, and a few choir members who had stayed behind waiting for us.

The second version uses punctuation (also capitalization) to good advantage, making the paragraph easier to read. Chapter 15 will help you learn the conventions for using commas effectively in your own work.



Chapter 16 focuses on editing for other types of punctuation and mechanics, including capitalization.

Commas

Although comma use can seem complicated, there are really just a handful of "rules" that govern most typical writing situations. The trouble comes when we try to apply these rules without knowing some fundamental sentence grammar, especially the correct use of subjects, verbs, phrases, and clauses. Knowing these sentence parts, a writer can see where one sentence begins and another ends and why one spot in a sentence is a more logical place to pause than another. In the next few pages, we will work with three main uses of the comma that will help you with most of your comma questions.

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The Big Three Comma Categories

Commas are primarily used to *separate* and *enclose*. More specifically, they have these three main uses:

THE BIG THREE COMMA CATEGORIES

1. To separate a main clause from an introductory word or words
2. To enclose or separate nonessential words, phrases, or clauses that come within or after a main clause
3. To separate two main clauses

English Review Note

While some people use their ear to determine where commas are needed, this approach can be misleading. Whether English is your first or fourth language, memorize the comma rules in this chapter.

To use commas effectively, first find the main clause (or clauses) from which the rest of the sentence grows. Remember that you identify a clause by looking for the action or being verb and then asking who or what is doing the action or is the focus of the being verb. With the main clause located, next check three areas where commas might be needed: word groups coming *before*, *within*, and *after* the main clause. The following sentence shows these comma uses:

Wandering through the woods,[1] Mario,[2] a boy fascinated by nature,[2] found a box turtle,[3] *and* he watched it cross the trail into the woods,[4] a journey that took the little animal five minutes.

1. The first comma sets off the introductory participial phrase *Wandering through the woods.* (rule 1)
2. The next two commas enclose the nonessential appositive phrase *a boy fascinated by nature.* (rule 2)
3. The comma before the conjunction separates the two main clauses. (rule 3)
4. The last comma separates the second main clause from the nonessential appositive that follows it. (rule 2)

Comma Category 1: Introducing Main Clauses

We often begin sentences with an introductory word, phrase, or subordinate clause, which should be separated from the main clause with a comma. This comma usually falls directly in front of the noun phrase ending with the simple subject, as in these examples:

1. *However,* the tired old man needed to rest.
2. *However,* Stan needed to rest.

In sentence 1 the comma that sets off *however* falls at the beginning of the underlined noun phrase, *the tired old man*, which ends with the simple subject *man*. In sentence 2 the comma is directly before the simple subject, *Stan*, with no other words attached to it. Most sentences follow the pattern of number 2, as you can see in the examples that follow.

HINT

Do not use *although* as a substitute for *however*, or you will create a sentence fragment.

Introductory Single Words

1. **Conjunctive adverb** (pp. 135–137) Common conjunctive adverbs include *however, nevertheless, therefore, in fact,* and *consequently.*

   However, Sadie wants to visit Charleston in the spring.

2. **Adverb** (pp. 121–126)

   Fortunately, she does have the money for the trip.

   No, I'm not going anywhere with him.

3. **Transitional word** (pp. 287–289) Common transitional words include *first, finally, next, last, also,* and *second.*
   First, the band had to set up its amps.
4. **Present participle** (Chapters 4 and 8)
   Wondering, Eva watched as the bulldozer moved closer.
5. **Past participle** (Chapters 4 and 8)
   Satisfied, Hank hung up on the telemarketer.
6. **Mild interjection** (p. 39)
   Oh, I see that you already have a date.

ACTIVITY 15.1 *Comma Category 1 with Single Words*

In the following sentences find the main clause, and underline the verb or verb phrase twice and the subject once. Next, set off with a comma single words at the beginning of the sentences. Notice that the comma usually falls directly in front of the subject of the main clause.

EXAMPLE: Also,you should pack a lunch.

1. Surely no one would be that foolish.
2. Next Arthur decided to read a magazine.
3. Unconcerned Gilbert left the mess for later.
4. Yes we are coming to the Christmas party.
5. Finally even Jamie showed up.
6. Luckily the case of food poisoning was mild.
7. Limping Reena slowly crossed the room to the kitchen table.
8. Create three of your own sentences that begin with a single nonessential word. Underline the verb of your main clause twice and the subject once.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

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Introductory Phrases

The same phrases that we practiced in Chapter 10 also require a comma when used at the beginning of sentences.

1. **Prepositional phrase** (pp. 142–143)
   Next to the bookshelf in the family room, Farah set her umbrella.
2. **Present participial phrase** (pp. 145–146)
   Leaping from the bank, Wyatt splashed into the river.
3. **Past participial phrase** (pp. 145–147)
   Satisfied with the outcome, Hank hung up on the telemarketer.
4. **Absolute phrase with present participle** (pp. 149–151)
   The plane flying low, searchers looked for signs of wreckage.
5. **Absolute phrase with past participle** (pp. 149–151)
   The boat unprepared for the open ocean, few of the searchers thought they would find any survivors.

6. **Infinitive phrase** (pp. 144–145) *To win the lottery,* Terry thought that he should buy at least ten tickets weekly.

7. **Appositive phrase** (pp. 152–153) *An accident waiting to happen,* Tom staggered through the door and into the party.



See pp. 161–162 for more on subordinating conjunctions.

Introductory Clauses

Adverb clauses that begin sentences also need to be set off where they join a main clause, as in the following examples:

1. *Because* the disposal company would no longer pick up glass, Burt began carting his bottles to the recycling center.
2. When robins return in April, we know that spring is near.

One way to identify adverb clauses is to memorize a few cue words, subordinating conjunctions like the words *because* and *when* in the previous sentences. Here are some common ones: *if, since, when, after, until, while, as, although, before, so that*.



With five or more words before the subject of the main clause, use a comma.

Notice that the word groups in the previous phrase and clause examples add meaning to the main clause, in effect introducing the main idea of the sentence. Another way to decide on an introductory comma is to find the subject of the main clause and count leading words. If there are five or more words in front of the subject, you probably need a comma.

Problems with Introductory Word Groups

When other words precede phrases and the adverb clause, we sometimes miss where the comma belongs; the following sentences place commas correctly:

1. *A few days* after I met her, I told Sophie that I would help her move.
2. *With* the wind howling outside, no one wanted to walk the dog.



In two-part sentences, punctuate the second half just like the first.

Sentence 1 begins with a noun phrase, so we might miss the comma needed to mark the end of the adverb clause. Sentence 2 begins with *with,* but this word is part of the absolute phrase, which should be set off with a comma. Applying the five-word test to both sentences also shows that a comma is needed.

Compound and compound-complex sentences can also make it difficult to see where introductory commas belong. When punctuating a two-part sentence, treat the second part as if it were the start of a new sentence. Therefore, if an introductory word group follows a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, so, or, yet, for, nor*) or a semicolon in the second part of a two-part sentence, use a comma, as in the following examples:

1. Nona wants to have her friend over this weekend, but with both her children sick from the flu, she knows that she can't.
2. Friday was miserable for everyone; *even though* Nona gave the kids cough medicine, they still coughed for half the night.

In sentence 1, an absolute phrase follows *but* in the second part of this compound-complex sentence, so the phrase requires a comma. The second half of sentence 2 follows the semicolon with an adverb clause starting with *even though* and so also must use a comma.

Writers sometimes omit a comma if a sentence begins with a short prepositional phrase or adverb clause, as in the following examples:

In the attic Wanda keeps all her picture albums.

If Dustin goes I'm staying home.

ACTIVITY 15.2 *Comma Category 1 with Phrases and the Adverb Clause*

In each of the following sentences, find the main clause, and underline the verb or verb phrase twice and the subject once. Now use a comma where needed to set off the introductory adverb clause or phrase.

EXAMPLE: Sliding down the banister, Eileen was careful to stop before she reached the bottom of the stairs.

1. Above the visor of his car Jim keeps his sunglasses.
2. When the New England Patriots take the field the fans know that they are in for an exciting game.
3. Excited about summer break students and teachers alike found it hard to concentrate on their work.
4. To mend a broken health care system politicians should say no to insurance and pharmaceutical companies.
5. His National Guard unit returning to Baghdad for another tour of duty Warren wondered if the war would ever be over.
6. Before the rim of the sun dropped into the Pacific Faron readied his camera to snap a photo of the green flash.
7. Feeling better than she had for a week the coach had a few kind words for her skaters.
8. Create three of your own sentences that begin with the following word groups requiring a comma. Underline the verb or verb phrase of the main clause twice and the subject once.
   a. Participial phrase:_____
   b. Prepositional phrase(s):_____
   c. Adverb clause: _____

Comma Category 2: Setting Off Nonessential Word Groups

The second major reason for using commas is to enclose nonessential words within or set them off at the end of main clauses. *Nonessential* means that the words are not needed to complete the meaning of the sentence: if such material is cut, the main idea is still clear. Let's compare nonessential to essential word groups:

ESSENTIAL

1. Last semester Dustin took a class *that* he barely passed.

NONESSENTIAL

2. Last semester Dustin took Algebra 121, *which* he barely passed.
3. Last semester Dustin took Algebra 121, *which* he barely passed, but he took it because he needed it for his major.

In sentence 1 the clause beginning with *that* identifies the class that Dustin took, so the clause is essential in the sentence and does not require a comma. On the other hand, sentences 2 and 3 use a *which* clause to give additional commentary, but not information essential to complete the meaning of the sentence. Therefore, commas are needed. We use the relative pronouns *that* and *which* to

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refer to things, animals, and ideas, with *which* most often reserved for nonessential clauses.

ESSENTIAL

4. A writer of children's books *who* is imaginative and industrious can succeed in the business.

NONESSENTIAL

5. One fabulously successful writer of children's books is J. K. Rowling, *who* is imaginative and industrious.

6. J. K. Rowling, *who* is imaginative and industrious, is a fabulously successful writer of children's books.



Use the word *who* (not *that*) to refer to people (individuals and groups, both specific and general).

Sentence 4 uses the *who* clause to identify what kind of children's writer can succeed: one *who is imaginative and industrious*. So no commas are needed. On the other hand, sentences 5 and 6 have already identified the writer by using a proper noun, *J. K. Rowling*; therefore, the *who* clause that follows is nonessential to complete the meaning of the sentence, and commas are required. When referring to people—even indirectly as, for example, *teachers, police officers, nurses,* and so forth—careful writers usually use the relative pronoun *who* instead of *that.*

We often use nonessential word groups to enrich writing. However, when doing so, we should signal with commas that the material is of secondary importance. In the following pages, you will see examples of nonessential single words, phrases, and clauses. Notice that the introductory word groups from the previous comma category still require commas when shifted within or attached to the end of the main clause.

Nonessential Single Words

Conjunctive adverb (pp. 135–136) Common conjunctive adverbs include *however, nevertheless, therefore, in fact,* and *consequently*.	Sadie wants to visit Charleston, *however,* in the spring.
Adverb (pp. 121–126)	She does have the money for the trip, *fortunately.*
Transitional word (pp. 287–289) Common transitional words include *first, finally, next, last, also, and second*.	The band, *first,* had to set up its amps.
Present participle (Chapters 4 and 8)	Eva watched, *wondering,* as the bulldozer moved closer.
Past participle (Chapters 4 and 8)	Hank, *satisfied,* hung up on the telemarketer.

ACTIVITY 15.3 *Comma Category 2 with Single Words*

In the following sentences find the main clause, and underline the verb or verb phrase twice and the subject once. Next, use commas to set off single nonessential words within or at the end of the sentences.

EXAMPLE: You should,finally,give everyone on the committee a copy.

1. Standing under a solitary tree in an electrical storm surely is foolish.

2. Allen also decided that he needed a haircut.
3. Both boys trembling tried to dare each other to go into the haunted house.
4. Professor Broomfield listened to her student's creative explanation for the absence fascinated.
5. We had nevertheless no other option but to contest the ticket.
6. Rikki slunk up on Nag silently.
7. Sherri's team leader in fact announced that they would help with Habitat for Humanity over the weekend.
8. Create three of your own sentences that use a nonessential word within them or at the end. Underline the verb or verb phrase of the main clause twice and the subject once.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

Nonessential Phrases

Nonessential phrases, too, can often be shifted from the front of a sentence to within it or attached to the end. You can see examples in the following sentences, most of which we worked with in comma category 1:

Present participial phrase (pp. 145–146)	Wyatt, *leaping from the bank*, splashed into the river.
Past participial phrase (pp. 145–147)	Hank hung up on the telemarketer, *satisfied with the outcome*.
Absolute phrase with present participle (pp. 149–151)	Searchers looked for signs of wreckage, *the plane flying low*.
Absolute phrase with past participle (pp. 149–151)	Few of the searchers thought they would find any survivors, *the boat unprepared for the open ocean*.
Infinitive phrase (pp. 144–145)	Terry thought that, *to win the lottery*, he should buy at least ten tickets weekly.
Appositive phrase (pp. 152–153)	Tom, *an accident waiting to happen*, staggered through the door and into the party.

We sometimes misuse commas when we confuse essential with nonessential participial phrases within and at the ends of sentences. Compare the participial phrases that end the following two sentences:

1. Citizens listened yet again to certain politicians *arguing* against the United States' involvement with the Kyoto Protocol.
2. Citizens listened yet again to certain politicians arguing against the United States' involvement with the Kyoto Protocol, *wondering* about the U.S. commitment to help slow global warming.

Sentence 1 tells which politicians the people are paying attention to. We could rewrite the phrase into an essential adjective clause that reads, *politicians who were arguing against the United States' involvement*.... Therefore, we do not use a comma. Sentence 2, on the other hand, ends with a nonessential participial phrase, one that merely adds a comment. So we need a comma.

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For more on dangling modifiers, see Chapter 8.

Notice that we could easily shift the phrase *wondering about the U.S. commitment*… to the beginning of the sentence because the phrase describes the subject, *citizens.* However, the phrase *arguing against*… is fixed in place next to the word it describes, *politicians*. To shift the "arguing" phrase to the beginning of sentence 1 would create a dangling modifier.

ACTIVITY 15.4 *Comma Category 2 with Phrases and the Adjective Clause*

In the following sentences find the main clause, and underline the verb or verb phrase twice and the subject once. Now use a comma to set off the nonessential phrases. If a sentence is correct, place a *C* in the space provided.

EXAMPLE: ___ Seeing his girlfriend's parents watching from the window, Neal said goodbye to Tammy quickly, falling over himself in his haste to leave.

1. ___ Because many dogs and cats are euthanized each year, around 7 million unwanted animals, neutering pets seems like a humane alternative.
2. ___ Some police departments have zero tolerance for speeding traffic tickets issued for going even a few miles over the limit.
3. ___ Doug decided to buy more organic food when he learned of the organic farming industry's benefits sustaining small farms, limiting environmental damage, producing tastier and healthier food, and raising animals more humanely.
4. ___ Recent reports have shown that, to increase their chances of survival, people are better off in the rear of a jet during a crash.
5. ___ Abby was nervous on her first day of swimming lessons concerned about sinking like a stone to the bottom of the pool.
6. ___ Emily feeling optimistic filled out the application for a home loan.
7. ___ Engineers at MIT have been studying bluegill fish able to swim without backward drag, to design better submarine propellers.
8. Create three of your own sentences that use a nonessential phrase within them or at the end. Underline the verb or verb phrase of the main clause twice and the subject once.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

Nonessential Clauses

Like phrases, clauses can be nonessential. When dealing with **adjective clauses,** (clauses most often beginning with the relative pronouns *who, which,* and *that*), we must determine if they are essential or not. If they are nonessential, we set them off with commas within or at the end of a main clause. Sometimes we create nonessential adjective clauses with words other than relative pronouns, most commonly the words *when* and *where,* as in the following examples:

1. **Essential:** Mary felt more comfortable in the house ***where*** she once lived.
2. **Nonessential:** Mary felt more comfortable in her last house, where she lived for 5 years.



Memorizing the *and/but* coordinating conjunction list will help you remember to edit for commas in two-part sentences.

Comma Category 3: Dividing Main Clauses

The last major reason for using commas is to separate main clauses within compound and compound-complex sentences—sentences that use a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, so, yet, nor, for*) to join two main clauses. Here are examples to illustrate the use of coordinating conjunctions:

1. The history many of us learn in school is often incomplete, *and* sometimes it is inaccurate.
2. For example, Christopher Columbus is thought by many to have discovered America, *but* he never set foot on the mainland.
3. However, Columbus did "discover" a cay in the Bahamas, Hispaniola, and Cuba, *so* he was able to secure financing for three more voyages.
4. Columbus did not discover the passage to China that he was looking for, *nor* did he reach the Indonesian Islands.
5. He did, however, name the inhabitants of Hispaniola "indios," *for* Columbus thought that he was in the Indies.
6. Columbus was unable to find much of the gold or many of the spices he sought, *yet* he did learn to smoke from the "indios" and introduced tobacco to Europe.
7. As we look more critically at other historical "facts," will they be confirmed, *or* will we find similar surprises?

Notice that each sentence has a subject and verb within main clauses on *both* sides of the coordinating conjunction. As discussed in Chapter 12, we often coordinate words and phrases with conjunctions like *and, but, yet,* and *or,* and these coordinations do not require commas because they are not separate clauses, although items in a series will, of course, also use commas (see previous sentence 3).



Do not put a comma before every coordinating conjunction.

It is important, however, not to insert a comma *wherever* you see a coordinating conjunction, as the following examples show:

1. **Not this:** Hyacinths, *and* daffodils mark the beginning of spring, *and* emerge when the rain, *and* warming earth bring them to life.
2. **But this:** Hyacinths *and* daffodils mark the beginning of spring *and* emerge when the rain *and* warming earth bring them to life.

Sentence 1 uses a compound subject, *hyacinths and daffodils*, which requires no comma. Also, no comma is needed to separate the two-part verb *mark* and *emerge. Rain* and *earth* are subjects of the adverb clause, so they, too, should not be divided with a comma.

3. **Not this:** The spring weather felt, *so* good that Cassandra went, *for* a walk, *so* (*that*) she could welcome the season properly.
4. **But this:** The spring weather felt *so* good that Cassandra went *for* a walk *so* (*that*) she could welcome the season properly.

Sentence 3 requires no commas for these reasons: the first *so* is used as an adverb rather than a coordinating conjunction, *for* is used as a preposition, and the second *so* includes an understood *that* (in parentheses in the example but often left out of a sentence). *So that* is a subordinating conjunction. When using *so* as a coordinating conjunction, think of it as meaning "thus" or "therefore." When using *for* as a coordinating conjunction, think of it as meaning "because."

One final point about coordinating conjunctions: When the main clauses are short, some writers omit the comma, as in the following example:

Ana's happy *so* my job is done.

3. **Essential:** Conrad only vaguely remembers the time in his life *when* he used to stay up and party till 3:00 a.m.

4. **Nonessential:** Conrad only vaguely remembers his twenties, *when* he used to stay up and party till 3:00 a.m.

Sentence 1 uses an essential adjective clause to identify which house Mary felt more comfortable in. Contrast sentence 1 with sentence 2, which requires a comma because when we say "her last house," we have identified it and so do not need the *where* clause that follows. It is nonessential. The same pattern holds true for sentences 3 and 4. Number 3 needs the *when* clause to identify which time in Conrad's life versus number 4, which names the time (his twenties) and so does not require a comma. The adjective clause in 4 is nonessential.



For more on nonessential versus essential word groups, see Chapters 10 and 11.

ACTIVITY 15.5 *Comma Category 2 with Phrases and the Adjective Clause*

In the following sentences find the main clause, and underline the verb or verb phrase twice and the subject once. Now use a comma to set off the nonessential adjective clauses. If a sentence is correct, place a *C* in the space provided.

EXAMPLE: ___ Employers continue to need and hire illegal immigrants,who will continue to come to the United States as long as they find employment.

1. ___ A service dog is a valuable animal that helps some people lead more productive lives.
2. ___ Women in the United States who have made many social and economic advances are, as a group, still paid less than their male counterparts.
3. ___ The Arctic Sea ice is continuing to melt which will mean the eventual end of polar bears and other life forms.
4. ___ Europeans were the ones who first developed the car, and the Duryea brothers who lived in Massachusetts were the ones who first developed the car in the United States.
5. ___ Mayflies which may spend a year or more as nymphs at the bottom of ponds and rivers hatch, take flight, breed, lay eggs, and die within 24 hours.
6. ___ Iceland is a country that gets most of its energy from geothermal power.
7. ___ Richard Nixon was the president who appointed Gerald Ford as vice president who then appointed Nelson Rockefeller as vice president.
8. Create three of your own sentences that use a nonessential adjective clause within them or at the end. Underline the verb or verb phrase of the main clause twice and the subject once.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

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ACTIVITY 15.6 *Comma Category 3 with Commas to Divide Main Clauses*

In the following sentences find the main clauses, and underline the verbs or verb phrases twice and the subjects once. Next, divide the clauses using a comma before the coordinating conjunction. If a sentence is correct, place a *C* in the space provided.

EXAMPLE: ___ Insurance companies say that they exist to protect those they insure,yet the companies' primary goal is profit.

1. ___ Some insurance companies are more profit driven than others so they try to deny any claim that they can avoid paying.
2. ___ Perhaps many health insurance companies are in this category for claims are often huge.
3. ___ Valerie went to the Nelson Art Gallery so she could see the Impressionist exhibit.
4. ___ The scientist waited for three days in her rain-forest tree perch but finally got the video footage that she was waiting for.
5. ___ Honeybees are dying by the thousands from a mysterious illness and as a result, the honey business in the Northeast is in danger.
6. ___ Selling toll roads to private businesses provides immediate money for local governments yet when the tolls begin to rise, how will motorists feel?
7. ___ The players and management will have to settle the strike or the fans will not have baseball this season.
8. Create three of your own compound or compound-complex sentences that use coordinating conjunctions. Underline the verbs or verb phrases of the main clauses twice and the subjects once.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

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Secondary Comma Categories

While the Big Three comma categories account for most necessary commas, there are other comma uses that writers should learn to avoid confusion.

Items in a Series

When three or more words or word groups are listed in a row, a comma should follow each, as in the following examples:

Series of nouns: Steve will shop for *shampoo*, *toothpaste*, and *hair spray*.

Series of verbs: On his way to Science City, Kyle *traveled* north on Main Street, *turned* west on 29th, and *wove* his way into the parking lot.

Series of main clauses: Vinay brought the green salad, Rajkumar brought naan, and Gabriel brought wine for the dinner.

Some writers are moving away from using a comma before the *and* in a series, but you are never wrong to use a comma there. By using the comma, you will avoid the potential confusion in sentences like the following:

> If you want to work here, you will be doing laundry, vacuuming, cooking and cleaning windows.

Does the job description really include cooking the windows?

Coordinate Adjectives

Coordinate adjectives—two or more equal adjectives in front of a noun (or pronoun)—need a comma between them.

> Koalas are *cute*, *cuddly* poster mammals.

In this sentence, we could use the word *and* in place of the comma (*cute and cuddly)* or reverse the two adjectives (*cuddly, cute*). Therefore the adjectives describe the noun equally and should be separated by commas.

Contrast this with the following example, which uses **cumulative adjectives**:

> *Three beautiful young* swans floated on the pond.

The words *three beautiful* describe the noun *swans*, but we could neither insert *and* between the words (*three and beautiful)* nor reverse them (*beautiful, three)* and still make sense. The two adjectives do not describe equally so should not be separated by commas.

Similarly, do not use a comma directly before or between **compound nouns**, like the following:

> Marla is happy to work in an *environmentally friendly* office building.

In this sentence *office building* is a single unit, so no comma should be used between *friendly* and *office* or between *office* and *building*.



Cumulative adjectives (pp. 270–271) fall into these main categories: number, judgment, size, age, color, location, and material.

Contrasting Expressions

We often contrast ideas in a sentence by using commas with the word *not*:

> Gregor, not Karim, is ahead in the tournament.

Misleading Expressions

If a sentence might be misinterpreted without a comma, either insert a comma or restructure the sentence:

Misleading:	On the shelf above the photo albums of our vacation are stored.
Comma added:	On the shelf above, the photo albums of our vacation are stored.
Rewritten:	The photo albums of our vacation are stored on the shelf above.

Numbers, Addresses, Place Names, Titles, Dates, Direct Address, Quotations

When using numbers, addresses, place names, titles, dates, direct address, and quotations, follow the conventions of standard comma placement:

Numbers	9,674,630
Note: No comma is used in year designations, such as *2009*.	

Addresses *Note:* No comma is used between the state name and the zip code in an address. No comma is used in number addresses or zip codes.	Joan lives at 5838 102 Street, Independence, MO 66207.
Place names	Rapid City, South Dakota, is near the Black Hills.
Titles (of persons)	Professor Hogan, Ph.D., knows Jay Antle, Jr.
Dates	On September 28, 1952, Lucille Edna gave birth to a healthy son.
Direct address	"Stan, will you please stop fidgeting?"
Quotations	"Yes," Matt Little-Eagle replied, "we call it the 'Bambi Effect' when people resist killing cute animals even when it is necessary."

ACTIVITY 15.7 *Commas with Secondary Categories*

Put commas where needed in the following sentences. More than one comma may be needed in each. If a sentence is correct, put a *C* in the blank provided.

EXAMPLE: ___ Mario,not Victor,visited relatives in Coffeyville,Kansas.

1. ___ Two iridescent ruby-throated hummingbirds hovered at the feeder.
2. ___ Baton Rouge Louisiana also suffered from Hurricane Katrina when it struck on August 29 2005.
3. ___ "Jamie" said her mother"will you please address this envelope to The Nature Conservancy at 4245 North Fairfax Drive Arlington VA 22203-1606?"
4. ___ John Henry a champion racehorse, won $6591860 between 1977 and 1984.
5. ___ Peter Robison M.D. has discovered an effective inexpensive cure for eczema, seborrhea, and psoriasis.
6. ___ In the shower by the drain you can see the crack starting to develop.
7. ___ Rebecca said "Mom if I have to eat any more of those awful fruit cocktail cups mandarin oranges or pineapples I'm going to barf."
8. ___ There were twenty-five smart mischievous second graders at work on the substitute teacher flying paper airplanes talking and chasing each other around the room.

Avoiding Unneeded Commas

Even knowing the main rules for comma use, writers sometimes use commas incorrectly. Guard against these four common comma errors:

1. Do not use commas to separate subjects from verbs or objects.
2. Do not use commas to separate compound constructions.
3. Do not use commas to separate essential word groups.
4. Do not use commas to separate adverb clauses after main clauses.

The following pages illustrate ways to avoid each of these problems.

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Separating Subject from Verb or Object

Avoid putting a comma between the subject and the verb or the verb and its object unless enclosing nonessential word groups, such as in this sentence: "New Mexico, an arid state, has lovely mountains." Note these *incorrectly* punctuated sentences; to correct each, remove the designated commas:

1. The Australian government finally, has signed the Kyoto Protocol. (subject separated from verb)
2. Whether Martin would come with us, was the question on everyone's mind. (noun clause subject separated from verb)
3. Koalas eat, only eucalyptus leaves. (verb separated from object)
4. Margaret gave a powerful presentation, to the board. (verb separated from indirect object)

Separating Compound Constructions

As we learned earlier in the chapter, two main clauses separated by a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, so, yet, for, nor)* require a comma. However, unless there is a subject and verb on *both* sides of the conjunction, do not use a comma. Here are several examples of *incorrectly* punctuated sentences; to correct each, remove the designated commas:

1. Therma Blades help ice skaters move faster, *but* are not allowed yet in the NHL. (compound verb: no subject after *but*)
2. Jesika Torres recently won a gold medal at the National Collegiate Championships, *and* was named outstanding female athlete of the year by the National Collegiate Taekwondo Association. (compound verb: no subject after *and*)
3. The burning of unprecedented amounts of fossil fuels, *and* the release of many industrial pollutants have accelerated global warming. (compound subject: one verb)
4. House Representative Dennis Moore has sponsored legislation to encourage noncustodial parents to pay all the child support money they owe, *and* to keep these parents from leaving the country until they fulfill their financial obligations. (compound infinitive phrases)

Separating Essential Word Groups



Remember to use *two* commas to enclose nonessential words.

Readers can also be confused when writers separate essential information from a sentence with commas. Here are examples of *incorrectly* punctuated sentences; to correct each, remove the designated commas:

1. Michael Moore's documentary, *Sicko*, helps to explain why America's health care system is in crisis. (Essential appositive: Moore has made several documentaries, not just one, so the commas in this sentence are misleading.)
2. The Canadian geese, that flew over my house this morning, woke me too early. (Essential adjective clause: the clause *that flew over…* is needed to point out which geese did the waking up.)
3. A report, telling of sunscreen's relationship to skin cancer, caught many doctors by surprise. (Essential participial phrase: the phrase *telling of sunscreen's…* is needed to identify which report.)
4. The woman, in the middle of the front row, is the president of the PTA. (Essential prepositional phrase: the phrase *in the middle of…* is needed to tell who is the PTA president.)

Separating Adverb Clauses after Main Clauses

Another comma problem occurs when separating an adverb clause from the main clause that it follows (adverb clauses begin with subordinating conjunctions like *because, if, since, when, until, while*). Note the following example:

Should not use comma: We stopped at McDonald's, *because* we love their fries.

Uses comma: Because we love their fries, we stopped at McDonald's.

Adverb clauses that begin with *although, though*, and *even though* usually *do* use a comma even when they follow a main clause because these subordinating conjunctions show concession.

ACTIVITY 15.8 WORKING TOGETHER: *Avoiding Unneeded Commas*



Work in pairs to underline the verb or verb phrase of the main clause twice and the subject once in the following sentences. Then discuss where commas are used incorrectly; cross these out, leaving the correct ones alone. If a sentence is correct, put a *C* in the blank provided. For any sentence with incorrectly used commas, note in the margin or on separate paper why commas should not be used. Go over your answers with other pairs or the whole class.

EXAMPLE: ___ Birds can fly, so long and high, because they breathe oxygen continuously, unlike mammals, which must exhale carbon dioxide before getting any more oxygen.

1. ___ Feeling a bit tired, by the day's events, Tabrina was glad to get home, because she knew that she had her recliner, waiting for her, and a large dish of chocolate ice cream.
2. ___ All nations, seeking oil wealth, are aware that Iraq has the second largest, verified, deposits of oil in the world, oil wealth that these countries are much interested in.
3. ___ One, German, megashipyard is run almost entirely by robots, with only one human operator, moving cargo containers with a giant crane.
4. ___ Barbie scores another hit, for the fifth year in a row, being the top choice of young girls, in the United States, for a Christmas present.
5. ___ Boys, in the United States, on the other hand, are clamoring for new Transformer toys, brought to life by the film, with the same name.
6. ___ Certain electric cars of the future, as near as 2011, may be available in large cities, and could be used, as public transportation, at various locations throughout the city.
7. ___ Because the iPhone offers music, videos, Internet access, and even telephone communication, it has attracted more than 1,400,000 users so far.
8. ___ Benjamin Kahn, an Israeli entrepreneur, is working with others to restore a large, damaged area of coral reef, in the Red Sea, because he loved the reef, when he dove there as a boy.

ACTIVITY 15.9 WORKING ONLINE: *Commas Practice*

Practice using commas in context with Gateway quizzes available on this book's Online Learning Center at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



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ACTIVITY 15.10 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Commas Review***



Take the Chapter 15 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. Punctuation helps readers sort out a writer's ideas.
2. There are three main uses (or Big Three Categories) of the comma:
   a. Commas separate a main clause from an introductory word or words.
   b. Commas enclose or separate nonessential words, phrases, or clauses that come within or after a main clause.
   c. Commas separate two main clauses.
3. There are several secondary comma categories:
   a. Commas separate items in a series.
   b. Commas separate coordinate adjectives.
   c. Commas separate contrasting ideas.
   d. Commas are used in the following conventions: numbers, addresses, place names, dates, titles, direct address, and quotations.
4. Avoid unneeded commas.

Other Punctuation Marks and Mechanics

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[*Punctuation gives readers a roadmap for finding their way through our writing. Compose a brief paragraph about a time you needed to ask for directions (or a time when you gave someone else directions). Before reading further in the chapter, see if you can find a way to use the following marks of punctuation—colon, dash, semicolon, and parentheses—in that paragraph. After working through the chapter, check to see if you have used the punctuation correctly.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Semicolons
- Colons
- Dashes
- Parentheses
- Quotation marks
- Apostrophes
- Capitalization
- Hyphens
- Numbers
- Underlining and italicizing

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

In Chapter 15 we learned about the comma as the utility mark of punctuation in writing, but there are other marks and methods useful for grouping and emphasizing ideas. In some cases these marks are used in similar ways, so the writer has a choice. Here, in Chapter 16, we will see how to work with semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses, and a few other methods for organizing and clarifying our writing.

Semicolon

If periods are full stops in sentences, bringing the reader to a temporary halt, and commas are half stops, just slight pauses, then semicolons might be thought of as three-quarter stops, marks midway between a comma and a period. We use semicolons for the following two purposes:

1. To divide main clauses without using a coordinating conjunction (such as *and* or *but*)
2. To separate word groups in a series that contains commas



Using semicolons to divide main clauses is one way to fix a comma splice or run-on sentence (see Chapter 14).

Dividing Main Clauses

1. It seems as if everyone who loves rock knows "Hotel California," by the Eagles; many people, though, aren't familiar with another classic Eagles' tune "Most of Us Are Sad."
2. It seems as if everyone who loves rock knows "Hotel California," by the Eagles; *however*, many people aren't familiar with another classic Eagles' tune "Most of Us Are Sad."

In sentences 1 and 2, periods could replace the semicolons; however, the second main clause in each sentence is so closely related to the first that the semicolon is a good choice. Sentence 2 shows how to use a conjunctive adverb (in this case *however*) when the relationship between the ideas in the main clauses warrants it. Notice that the subordinating conjunction *though* was dropped from sentence 1 and effectively replaced by the conjunctive adverb in 2. Other common conjunctive adverb connectors are *therefore, nevertheless, then, in fact,* and *consequently*.

Separating Word Groups in a Series

The second use of the semicolon is to separate items in a series that have commas within them, as in the following example:

> Robots have reached the point today where they can interact with people, saying hello, for example, and shaking their hands; interact with their environment, for example, moving away from obstacles in their path and locating objects they are programmed to recognize; and learn from their mistakes.

In the sentence above, there are three primary word groups in a series, *interact with people, interact with their environment,* and *learn from their mistakes.* However, the first two word groups have other words within them that are separated by commas, so semicolons are used to avoid confusion among the main word groups in the series.

Colon

The colon has three primary uses:

1. It can begin a formal list.
2. It can separate closely related main clauses (as does the semicolon).

3. It can mark a formal appositive (nonessential describing word or phrase) at the end of a sentence.

Two minor uses for the colon are introducing quotations (*Lincoln spoke these words: "Four score and seven years ago. . . ."*) and after the salutation of a business letter (*Dear Professor Rollins:*).

Introducing a Formal List

When introducing a list, the colon should be viewed as end punctuation. Like a period it ends one grammatical sentence and begins the list:

> Margo has three goals this summer: to get in shape, see her friends more, and volunteer for service work in her community.

You do not need a colon in a sentence that includes the series of items within it, like this:

> Unnecessary colon: This summer Margo plans to: get in shape, see her friends more, and volunteer for service work in her community.

Separating Main Clauses

Similar to a semicolon, a colon can be used to divide closely related main clauses. To use a colon, however, the second clause should restate or complete the meaning of the first:

> Some studies show that aspirin is not a good treatment for high blood pressure: the studies say that aspirin can increase heart attacks.

Marking a Formal Appositive

The following sentence ends with a formal appositive, which describes the noun it follows, *Basra*. A comma or dash could also be used here.

> The wealth of Iraq is centered in Basra: the oil producer for the rest of the country.

Dash

The dash is a versatile punctuation mark that can help writers in several ways: to set off a series that begins a sentence, to indicate an abrupt break in thought within a sentence, to enclose items in a series that contain commas, and to emphasize a word or word group at the end of a sentence. Avoid overusing dashes; try to use only one or two per page.



A dash (—) is longer than a hyphen (-). Use two hyphens on your keyboard to create a dash.

Uses of the Dash

Set off beginning of a series:	The Democrats, the Republicans, the Libertarians—they all claim to have the answer for the nation's ills.
Show a break in thought:	Dodi is going to San Francisco—or so she says—for the weekend. (Commas or parentheses could also be used here.)
Set off items in a series:	Tony checked off the key trip gear—clothing, tent, sleeping bag, and food—but did not remember his compass. (Without the dashes, this sentence might mislead readers that key trip gear is just another item on the list: *Tony checked off the key trip gear, clothing, tent, sleeping bag, and food. . . .*)

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Emphasize final word group: No one felt as strongly about the issue of global warming as did Clarice—unless perhaps it was Al Gore. (A comma, a colon, or parentheses might also be used here. The dash may give the most emphasis of the three.)

Parentheses

We use parentheses primarily to add nonessential material to a main clause, much as we use commas to set off similar unneeded but useful material. Sometimes commas and parentheses are interchangeable in a sentence, but writers usually reserve parentheses for more loosely related material, as in the following example:

> James Baldwin spoke eloquently (and often) about the dehumanizing effects of racial discrimination on both the oppressed and the oppressor.

If you insert a whole main clause within parentheses, you do not need to capitalize the lead word or end the clause with punctuation:

> James Baldwin spoke eloquently (and he spoke often) about the dehumanizing effects of racial discrimination on both the oppressed and the oppressor.

Avoid overusing parentheses; usually once or twice a page is enough.

ACTIVITY 16.1 *Using Punctuation That Separates*



There may be more than one error in a sentence and more than one way to fix the problem.

In the following sentences underline the verbs or verb phrases of the main clauses twice and the subjects once. Then locate word groups that should be set off from the rest of the sentence, and use one of the following marks of punctuation to do so: semicolon, colon, dash, or parentheses.

EXAMPLE: Birds can breathe so efficiently—three times better than mammals—because they are descended from dinosaurs: creatures that survived during an age of low atmospheric oxygen.

1. Jack Hammer he was a truck driver from Tulsa was obsessed with body art he spent $2,000 last year on skin illustrations at his favorite tattoo parlor the Lazy Dragon Tattoo and Body Piercing Shop.
2. Nine countries now possess nuclear weapons however not all members of the nuclear club advertise their nuclear capability.
3. One urban myth talks about the woman bitten by a venomous snake while trying on a coat shipped from another country Pakistan, India, China, Indonesia, Korea this myth combines fear of snakes with distrust of "foreigners."
4. Before leaving for class, Birgit checked all her school supplies pens pencils, markers, paper, and flashdrive so she would be prepared for the day.
5. Although the United States is a nation of immigrants, some do not see the country as a "melting pot" they call it more a "salad bowl" a nation of people living near each other but not really "blended."

6. Another urban myth tells of the unlucky swimmer who dives into a river (lake or pond) only to find himself trapped in a "nest of water moccasins" and bitten hundreds of times before he dies however water moccasins do not nest in the water or in large numbers therefore this horror story is not possible another urban myth laid to rest.
7. Top water lures, spinner baits, and plastic lures Hank had all he needed for his fishing trip to Kissimmee Chain of Lakes his favorite bass-fishing vacation.
8. After his heart attack, Danny researched how to reduce plaque in his body, finding this out healthy foods are essential, with at least nine good plaque fighters available certain oils raise good cholesterol such as olive oil and other oils dissolve plaque in blood vessels, with only one-half ounce of the oil needed daily.

Quotation Marks

Quotation marks are used primarily to enclose spoken and written words, either as dialogue or quotations from a text. We also occasionally use quotation marks when referring to a word used as a word (the word *astronaut*), to enclose the titles of short creative works (stories, essays, poems, newspaper and magazine articles, songs, and episodes on television), and to show that we question the word's intended meaning. (*The senator declared that she would consider the legislation in a "timely" way, which we took to mean never.*)

Note the following main uses of quotation marks:

Dialogue:	"Let's get the sleds," said Darlene, "before all the snow melts!"
Quotation from text:	In the latest edition of his popular history text, Kenneth Davis remarks: "We like to think of elected officials as leaders, but in fact they often follow where the country is going."

Notice that the comma after *sleds*, the exclamation point after *melts,* and the period after *going* are placed inside the quotation marks; the comma following *Darlene* in the middle of the dialogue sentence is outside the quotation marks.

Apostrophe

Apostrophes have two main functions:

1. They mark the omission of letters in contractions.
2. They show ownership.

Contractions

A **contraction** is a word formed as an abbreviated combination of other words; it uses an apostrophe to stand in for omitted letters. Here are some common contractions: *wouldn't* (would not), *won't* (will not), *let's* (let us), *it's* (it is), *you're* (you are), *who's* (who is/has). Be careful when using contractions not to mistake *it's*, *you're*, and *who's* for these sound-alike possessive pronouns: *its*, *your*, and *whose*.



It's, *you're*, and *who's* (contractions) are different words than *its*, *your*, and *whose* (possessive pronouns).

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Possession

English Review Note

In English, an apostrophe is used to indicate possession. (This is not the case in all languages.)

To show singular ownership, we use the apostrophe like this:

Sarah's purse the *storm's* fury the car's GPS system

To indicate plural possession, we put the apostrophe after the *s*:

the *girls'* room the *students'* interests the *countries'* treaty

Some words that show possession are not obvious, for example, a *week's* delay, last *year's* concert, or a few *dollars'* worth of candy. Restating the possessive word as an "of" phrase usually clarifies the need for the apostrophe: the delay *of a week* or the concert *of last year*.

Capitalization

English Review Note

Review this list. Capitalization rules differ from language to language. For instance, some languages capitalize all nouns, while English capitalizes only *proper* nouns.

We capitalize **proper names**—specific, unique individuals or things—and words derived from them. Here are several categories of words we capitalize:

People, things, trademarks:	Matt, Toyota Corolla, Sprite
Professional titles:	Professor Hastings, Doctor Roberts, Senator Snow
Organizations, institutions, government offices, sports teams, companies:	Harvesters, Sierra Club, PTA; Barton County Community College, Humana Hospital; Senate, Bureau of Land Management, FDA; Oakland Raiders; Sprint
Nationalities, ethnicities, and races:	Greek, Russian, Venezuelan, French, Chinese, Iraqi, Latino, Asian, African American, Native American, Caucasian
Languages:	Italian, Spanish, Mandarin, Swahili, Portuguese, English
Religious followers, deities, and holy books:	Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu; Christ, Allah, Yahweh; Bible, Koran, Talmud
Historical documents, periods, events:	the Declaration of Independence, the Middle Ages, the Iraq War
Geographic names:	the Blue Ridge Mountains, Carson City, Pacific Northwest, Middle East, Indian Ocean
Days, months, holidays:	Sunday, June, Thanksgiving
First word in a direct quote:	Maggie asked, "Will you get the mail?"
Titles (of books, stories, films, magazines, newspapers, poems, songs, and works of art):	*Don't Know Much about History*, "The Menace from Earth," *Time*, *The Washington Post*, "The Road Not Taken," "The 59th Street Bridge Song," *The Scream*

In titles, capitalize all words except for *prepositions* (*on, in, at,* etc.), *coordinating conjunctions* (*and, but, or, so, yet, nor, for*), and *articles* (*a, an, the*)—unless any of these words follow a colon in the title (as in the next example) or begin or end the title:

Sleeper: A Look into the Future

Do *not* capitalize the following:

Seasons:	fall, summer
Plants:	ivy, maple
Animals:	chipmunk, centipede
School subjects:	physics, history
Compass points:	north, south (unless as a specific region, as the *Midwest*)

Also, note that we capitalize a person's professional title but not the general profession:

Doctor Jackson, but Ana Jackson is a *doctor*
Southeastern *High School,* but Ted's *high school*

Hyphen

Hyphens join words and show where words are divided into syllables.

Prefixes:	ex-politician, anti-government, self-esteem, pro-labor
Compound words:	daughter-in-law, go-getter, hand-me-down, twenty-two
Compound adjectives:	middle-class lifestyle, well-behaved son, best-selling movie, long-awaited contest, well-known player, first-class tickets

When the compound adjective follows the noun, no hyphen is used:

His son is well behaved.

Hyphens can also be used at the end of a line of text to divide a word between syllables:

She was looking for a clean shirt to wear to the inter-
view when she found her missing scarf.

Numbers

Some writers prefer to use numerals instead of letters for numbers in most cases. However, a more traditional treatment calls for spelling out numbers of one or two words (*two, fifteen, forty-one*) and then using numerals for numbers of three words or more (*101; 3,085; 4,896,142*).

Here are several other conventions for number use:

Dates: (The letters *-st*, *-d*, and *-th* are not needed after dates.)	March 7, 2009
Addresses:	437 Holly Lane
Series: (Use numerals or letters consistently.)	The trench was 55 feet long, 14 feet wide, and 5 inches deep.
Sentence beginnings: (Spell out a number at the start of a sentence, or recast the sentence.)	One hundred twelve people escaped from the fire.
Percentages/decimals/ fractions:	The mixture was 10.5 percent (or %) water. 5½ feet



Remember that when writing the date in English, the month precedes the date.

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Scores and statistics:	the score: 7 to 3 batting 350
Amounts of money:	$8.35 10 cents (or ten cents) 1,000,000 (or one million)
Page numbers:	on page 98
Identification numbers:	room 12 Interstate 70 Channel 3
Times:	6:00 p.m. (but six o'clock)



Standard English uses a 12-hour clock, not a 24-hour one.

Underlining and Italicizing

We underline words to draw the reader's attention to them (italicizing is an option in word processing), but most underlining or italicizing is for titles.

Titles

The following list shows categories of works to underline or italicize (note that the titles of shorter works are enclosed in quotation marks):

Books: (Short stories use quotation marks.)	*Snow Falling on Cedars*
Plays and movies:	*Macbeth, Iron Man*
Pamphlets:	*Training Your Wheaten*
Musical works:	*Déjà Vu*
Television and radio programs or podcasts: (Single episodes use quotation marks.)	*South Park, Austin Music Minute*
Long poems: (Short poems use quotation marks.)	*The Iliad*
Periodicals, such as magazines and journals: (Articles use quotation marks.)	*Time*
Published speeches:	*I Have a Dream*
Works of art:	*Mona Lisa*
Websites: (Individual web pages use quotation marks.)	*Salon.com, Fandango*

Here are some other uses of italics:

Names of specific airplanes, trains, ships, and satellites:	*the Titanic* *Voyager 2* *the Hubble Space Telescope*
Words and letters referred to as such:	The Hawaiian word *humuhumunukunukuapua'a* is a mouthful.
Emphasis (use italics sparingly for this purpose):	Carter, you'd best leave *now*!

ACTIVITY 16.2 WORKING TOGETHER: *Practicing Mechanics*



In the following sentences in the *main* clauses, underline the verb or verb phrase twice and the subject once, and then correct the errors. Check for quotation marks, apostrophes, capitalization, hyphens, numbers, and underlining/italicizing. In pairs or small groups, compare your corrections with those of other classmates.

EXAMPLE: The poem our hold on the planet, by robert frost, offers a modestly optimistic view of nature.

The poem "Our Hold on the Planet," by Robert Frost, offers a modestly optimistic view of nature.

1. As he was reading stopping by woods on a snowy evening david remarked, I wonder how frost really felt about death?

2. The movie enchanted is a fun spoof of many fairy tale clichés.

3. The Sycamore tree along indian creek in roe park is a beauty, it's bark silver-white and it's main trunk leaning at a 60 degree angle over the jogging path.

4. Felicia Abrams, M.d., author of the book the pills that kill you, said, only forty percent of the mice tested survived the New Drug.

5. Some reports have stated that 650000 civilians have died in iraq since the war began.

6. There are many elvis look alikes who keep the kings memory alive through well rehearsed performance and close attention to costuming.

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7. Recently, toyota has become the worlds' best selling automobile Manufacturer while general motors has dropped to 2nd place.

_____

_____

8. Lashelle said, its important to me to raise my kids so that they respect land care for the land, and, she added, that they know its ok to use the land, just not to use it up.

_____

_____

ACTIVITY 16.3 *Using Punctuation: Mixed Review*

Edit the following paragraphs for these errors: commas, semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses, quotation marks, apostrophes, hyphens, capitalization, numbers, and italicizing. In each sentence begin by underlining the verb of the main clause twice and the subject once. Make your corrections in the sentence or write them above it. The first two sentences are edited as an example.

Pesticides: Poisoning the Food Supply



Review comma rules from Chapter 15 to help make your corrections.

Little Brandon sits despondently at the dinner table, squashing the Green Beans on his plate with a fork.

"Mom, do I have to eat this stuff?" Brandons mother looks at him with amusement. Eat your vegetables, young man. Theyre good for you! This is a typical family scenario played out in thousands of american household's daily. Children resist the Fruits and Vegetables that their parents push as wholesome and valuable foods.

But are the Green Beans as safe and wholesome as Brandons mother assumes? A recent study by the consumers union, Publisher of consumer reports magazine, indicates that the fruit and vegetable supply of the united states is contaminated with unsafe levels of Pesticides. Using twenty-seven thousand food samples obtained from usda testing records, the study found alarmingly high levels of Pesticides in the following produce Squash, Grapes, Apples, Spinach, Pears, Green Beans, and Peaches. Children

with their relatively low body weight and sensitive systems are the ones most likely to suffer the ill effects of Pesticide residues. As many as one hundred and ten thousand pesticide poisonings are reported annually by Poison Control Agencies, in these incidents, approximately 20 people die primarily children. While the governments many program's to inform the Public about the health benefits of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables are important, consumers are not receiving enough information on the potential hazards of pesticides. Only by researching both sides of the pesticides question can a consumer make educated decisions on food related health issues.

The results of the consumer union report are vigorously disputed by Agricultural and Trade groups, organizations that criticize the methods by which the study was conducted. However, because the data were derived from the usda records, it is difficult for the epa to question the truth of the consumer union results. Coincidentally, the epa is also releasing a new brochure in conjunction with the food quality protection act passed by congress. The brochure, to be available to consumers at forty thousand grocery stores throughout the United States, advises that childrens' sensitive nervous systems may be adversely affected by pesticides found on some produce. The epa then recommends that consumers wash and peel questionable produce, it also recommends that consumers vary the amount and types of food they choose, to limit exposure to any single pesticide. The fact that the epa acknowledges the consumer unions study shows significant concern about childrens' susceptibility to pesticides in our food supply.

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ACTIVITY 16.4 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Punctuation and Mechanics Review***

Take the Chapter 16 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. Use a semicolon to divide main clauses without using a coordinating conjunction and to separate items in a series that are subdivided with commas.
2. Use a colon primarily to begin a formal list, to separate closely related main clauses, and to mark a formal appositive.
3. Use a dash to set off a series that begins a sentence, to show an abrupt break in thought, to enclose items in a series that contain commas, and to emphasize a word group at the end of a sentence.
4. Use parentheses to add nonessential material to a main clause.
5. Use quotation marks primarily to enclose the spoken or written word or to identify the titles of short works, such as poems, songs, and single episodes of television shows.
6. Use the apostrophe to mark contractions and possession.
7. Capitalize proper nouns.
8. Use a hyphen to join words and to show where words are divided into syllables.
9. In general, use numerals for numbers of three or more words, but spell out numbers of one or two words. However, some conventions call for numerals in all instances, such as dates; addresses; percentages, decimals, fractions; scores and statistics; and others.
10. Underline or italicize to emphasize a word or identify the titles of long works, such as books, movies, and television shows.

Spelling and Sound-alike Words

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[*Imagine that you are either walking to this school yourself or taking your kids there for the first time. How would this huge misspelled word make you feel? Concerned for the quality of education? Amused? Either way, spelling errors, especially in a professional or educational setting, can reflect badly on a single writer or a whole organization. In a paragraph, discuss how and why poor spelling might influence your reader's opinion of you.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Suggestions for help with spelling
- A review of vowels and consonants
- Useful spelling patterns
- Sound-alike words

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

An argument that might seem convincing in conversation can quickly lose credibility in writing if words are misspelled or used incorrectly. Although spelling should be a low priority in early drafts, careful writers try to catch every misspelling and sound-alike word error during the editing process. It's not just that errors in spelling can affect people's understanding of our ideas; even more often, misspelled words affect people's *perception* of us. Even the brightest, most well-qualified job applicant who submits a résumé littered with mistakes (like using *there* instead of *their* or *are* instead of *our*) or who writes phrases like *exsellent writen communnication skils* will have a hard time getting an interview.

English spelling can be difficult for everyone, especially in the case of words that are not spelled phonetically—words like *knit, knee, gnaw, photograph, xylophone,* and *reign*. But there are patterns we can depend on to answer many spelling questions. This chapter will help you improve your spelling with some basic rules, as well as lists of commonly misspelled words and sound-alike words.



Spelling varies across English-speaking countries. Consult a dictionary for correct American English spellings. Common errors include *realise* (should be *realize*), *colour* (should be *color*), *judgement* (should be *judgment*) and *connexion* (should be *connection*).

Some Suggestions for Help with Spelling

1. **Make a decision to work on your spelling.** If you want to improve, you can.
2. **Develop the dictionary habit.** Write with a dictionary close at hand. Put a question mark by words you are unsure of as you draft, and then use your dictionary to find the correct spelling. If you try several letter combinations and still cannot find the correct spelling, mark the word and ask someone for help—perhaps a person in your class.
3. **Buy an electronic dictionary** programmed to search using approximate spellings.
4. **Take advantage of the spell-check feature** when working on the computer. Understand, however, that even the best spell checkers cannot distinguish between sound-alike words such as *there* and *their.* Spell checkers can often help with, but not solve, spelling problems.
5. **Begin a personal spelling list** of words you are unsure of or have misspelled in compositions. Pay particular attention to the ordinary words you use regularly and to sound-alike words *(it's/its, their/there, then/than).* These words create far more problems than less commonly used words like *photosynthesis* or *encapsulate* that we are more likely to look up. Small, frequently misspelled words are generally more likely to plague writers.
6. **When you begin to edit, look closely at every word in every sentence,** pausing to sound the word out syllable by syllable.
7. **Try to remember pattern words** that have similar consonant/vowel arrangements and the same number of syllables. If, for example, you are unsure of whether to double the *p* in the word *hopped* but are fairly sure about the double *p* in *stopped*, the similarity in syllables and consonant/vowel arrangement will often help you make the right decision.
8. **Test yourself with the lists of commonly misspelled words and sound-alike words in this chapter**. List any word that you misspell during the test on your spelling chart along with the correct spelling. It often helps to pronounce the word aloud several times, exaggerating the stresses on syllables, such as *soph-O-more* or *math-E-mat-ics*.
9. **When you discover a misspelled word, look up the correct spelling,** and then write the word several times, preferably within a sentence.
10. **Study the spelling patterns listed in this chapter**.



The Improvement Chart in the back of this text is a good place to record your spelling list.

A Review of Vowels and Consonants

Much of spelling depends on being able to break words into syllables and to recognize vowels and consonants. **Syllables** are simply units of sound—the way a word is divided in the dictionary, for example: *syl-la-ble* or *foot-ball*. **Vowels** and **consonants** are the names that we give to the two groups of letters into which we divide the twenty-six letters of our alphabet.

Vowels: *a, e, i, o, u*

Consonants: *b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z*

The letter *y* can function as either a vowel or a consonant, depending on the word it is in and its placement in the word.

***Y* as a vowel:** *pretty* (the *y* sounds like *ee*) and *fly* (the *y* sounds like *i*)

***Y* as a consonant:** *yes*



Vowels often present a challenge and may need additional practice for mastery.

Some Useful Spelling Patterns

Doubling the Final Consonant

To know when to double the final consonant of a word when adding a suffix (a brief ending like *-ed, -ing, -er,* or *-est*), ask the three following questions:

1. Is the word one syllable (*spot*) or accented on the last syllable (*re-CUR*)?
2. Are the last three letters of the word consonant/vowel/consonant (sp-o-t, rec-u-r)?
3. Does the suffix begin with a vowel (*-ed,-ing*)?

If all three of these conditions are met, double the final consonant, as in the following lists:

SINGLE-SYLLABLE WORDS	WORDS ACCENTED ON THE FINAL SYLLABLE
spin + ing = spi**nn**ing	oc-CUR + ing = occu**rr**ing
drop + ed = dro**pp**ed	be-GIN + ing = begi**nn**ing
tan + er = ta**nn**er	per-MIT + ed = permi**tt**ed
hot + est = ho**tt**est	re-FER + ed = refe**rr**ed

If any of the three conditions are lacking, do *not* double the final consonant.

cen-ter + ing = centering	(*center* is not accented on the last syllable)
risk + ed = risked	(*risk* does not end in a consonant/vowel/consonant)
sweet + ly = sweetly	(*sweet* does not end in a consonant/vowel/consonant nor does *-ly* begin with a vowel)

Notice that the following words fulfill conditions 1 and 3 but not 2. None of the following words end in consonant/vowel/consonant:

SINGLE-SYLLABLE WORDS	WORDS ACCENTED ON THE FINAL SYLLABLE
brawl + ing = brawling	repair + ing = repairing
loop + ed = looped	suspend + ing = suspending
train + er = trainer	commend + ed = commended
bright + est = brightest	disappear + ed = disappeared

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ACTIVITY 17.1 Doubling the Final Consonant (Or Not)

In each of the following sentences, choose a suffix (*-ed, -ing, -er,* or *-est*), and spell the word in parentheses correctly in the space provided. Remember to apply the three checkpoints to determine whether to double the final consonant.

EXAMPLE: Joseph caused so many problems in school that he was (expel) *expelled.*

1. Adam, the most popular boy in middle school, (swagger) _____ down the hall.
2. Adrian blew the balloon up one breath too many, and it (pop) _____ in her face.
3. The auto body shop did a great job of (detail) _____ the old Chevy.
4. Periodically, groups consider (ban) _____ books like *Huckleberry Finn* from school libraries.
5. The committee chair (permit) _____ discussion for only 10 minutes.
6. Randy thought about (cheat) _____ on his final exam but decided against it.
7. He surprised himself by receiving the (high) _____ grade in the class.
8. The Sierra Club is (commit) _____ to saving animal habitats.

Dropping or Keeping the Final e

HINT

Several exceptions to this rule are *manageable, noticeable, courageous, mileage, acreage,* and *dyeing.*

As a general rule, when adding a suffix to a word ending in *e*, do the following:

- **Drop the final *e* if the suffix begins with a vowel.** Common suffixes are *-ing, -al, -able, -ence, -ance, -ion, -ous, -ure, -ive,* and *-age.*

move + ing = moving
arrive + al = arrival
rewrite + able = rewritable
interfere + ence = interference
insure + ance = insurance
segregate + ion = segregation
continue + ous = continuous
foreclose + ure = foreclosure
operate + ive = operative
store + age = storage

- **Keep the final *e* if the suffix begins with a consonant**. Common suffixes are *-ly, -ment, -ness, -less, -ty,* and *-ful.*

HINT

Several exceptions to this rule are *truly, wholly, acknowledgment, argument, judgment,* and *ninth.*

accurate + ly = accurately
arrange + ment = arrangement
rude + ness = rudeness
care + less = careless
entire + ty = entirety
hope + ful = hopeful

ACTIVITY 17.2 Dropping or Keeping the Final e

In each of the following sentences, choose a suffix from the preceding lists, and spell the word in parentheses correctly in the space provided. Remember to keep the *e* if the suffix begins with a consonant but to drop the *e* if the suffix begins with a vowel.

EXAMPLE: One way that private security firms are trying to change their image is by (change) *changing* self-descriptive terms like "mercenaries" to "peace-keepers" and "global stabilization experts."

1. There is a (move) _____ for change in current U.S. law that gives private companies immunity from (prosecute) _____ for actions taken outside our country.
2. Ethan thought it might be (advise) _____ to catch up on world events.
3. He was (care) _____ to read and listen to many points of view from several sources before forming an opinion.
4. What he learned through his efforts was (surprise) _____.
5. Among other things Ethan found out that many national and international issues are more (debate) _____ than he had previously thought.
6. Videotaping of police (interrogate) _____ is now standard practice in many states.
7. Some pundits propose (privatize) _____ agencies like police forces, fire departments, and emergency response groups.
8. In the end Ethan was (hope) _____ that his efforts would help him make better choices in the voting booth.

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Changing or Not Changing the Final y to i

Changing *y* to *i*

When a word ends with a *y* preceded by a **consonant**, change the *y* to *i* when you add a suffix, as in the following examples:

try + es = tries	lively + ness = liveliness
defy + ance = defiance	wealthy + est = wealthiest
supply + ed = supplied	merry + ment = merriment
mercy + less = merciless	beauty + ful = beautiful

Keeping the *y*

1. When a word ends with a *y* preceded by a **vowel**, keep the *y* and add the suffix, as in the following examples:

employ + able = employable	joy + ful = joyful
obey + ed = obeyed	employ + ment = employment
joy + ous = joyous	coy + ly = coyly
gay + est = gayest	essay + ist = essayist

2. When a word ends in *y*, and you want to add the suffix *-ing*, always keep the *y*:

cry + ing = crying	study + ing = studying
enjoy + ing = enjoying	lay + ing = laying
lobby + ing = lobbying	say + ing = saying



Here are several exceptions to this rule: *paid*, *said*, *laid*, *daily*, and *gaily*.

ACTIVITY 17.3 *Changing or Not Changing the Final y to i*

In the following sentences choose a suffix from the preceding lists, and spell the word in parentheses correctly in the space provided. Remember to change the *y* to *i* if the *y* is preceded by a consonant but not if it is preceded by a vowel.

EXAMPLE: April has been the (rainy) rainiest month this year.

1. Natalia's composition instructor was (mercy) _____ with the amount of homework assigned.
2. Edward got much (enjoy) _____ from watching *Monday Night Football*.
3. The major (annoy) _____ Teka felt on her trip was that her friend was reluctant to stop for rest breaks.
4. Having moved to a new city her senior year, Morgan felt her (lonely) _____ daily.
5. When (sky) _____ are sunny and the weather mild, many people want to be outdoors.
6. Riding a bicycle for 50 miles is (enjoy) _____ for many people.
7. After finishing school, most people hope to find (employ) _____.
8. Early in the morning Ned's dog was always (play) _____.

Forming Plurals: -s or -es

Most nouns form their plurals by adding *-s* (*bills*) or *-es* (*brushes*).

English Review Note

Some languages have other markers for number. It may take additional review to understand plural forms in English.

1. **If the word ends in *ch*, *sh*, ss, *x*, or *z*, add *-es*:**

   porch + es = porches kiss + es = kisses buzz + es = buzzes

   dish+ es = dishes fox + es = foxes

2. **If the noun ends in *y* preceded by a vowel, add *-s*:**

   Monday + s = Mondays attorney + s = attorneys

   donkey + s = donkeys buy + s = buys

3. **If the word ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, change the *y* to *i* and add *-es*:**

   summary + es = summaries cherry + es = cherries

   lady + es = ladies party + es = parties

4. **If the word ends in *o* preceded by a consonant, usually add an-*es*:**

   tomato + es = tomatoes potato + es = potatoes

   hero + es = heroes mosquito + es = mosquitoes

   (**Exceptions:** piano/pianos, solo/solos, memo/memos, avocado/avocados)

5. **If the word ends in *o* preceded by a vowel, usually add an-*s*:**

   video + s = videos patio + s = patios

   pistachio + s = pistachios portfolio + s = portfolios

ACTIVITY 17.4 Forming Plurals

Review the preceding information on forming plurals, and then write the plural form of each of the following words.

EXAMPLE: church = churches

1. wish _____
2. radio _____
3. box _____
4. monkey _____
5. Tuesday _____
6. tomato _____
7. table _____
8. booth _____
9. boo _____
10. cloth _____
11. coin _____
12. zoo _____
13. faith _____
14. branch _____
15. veto _____
16. waltz _____

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Using ie or ei

In most instances use *i* before *e*, except after *c*. However, use *ei* for the vowel sound *ay* (as in *neighbor* and *weigh*).

- ***ie*:** friend relieve brief field
  (Exceptions: caffeine, seize, height, leisure, neither, either, weird, foreign)
- ***ei* after *c*:** perceive conceit deceive ceiling
  (Exceptions: science, conscience, efficient, species)
- ***ei* that sounds like *ay*:** freight sleigh weight beige

ACTIVITY 17.5 Choosing ie or ei

Review the preceding information on how to use the *ie/ei* combinations, and then fill in the needed letters in the words below.

EXAMPLE: fr_ie_nd

1. l__sure	9. dec__t
2. gr__vance	10. th__f
3. pat__nce	11. w__rd
4. conc__t	12. n__ghbor
5. __ther	13. n__ther
6. c__ling	14. hyg__ne
7. fr__ght	15. sc__nce
8. exper__nce	16. w__gh

The following is a list of words that writers often misspell. You can quiz yourself (and your classmates) on these words to find out which you need to memorize.

FREQUENTLY MISSPELLED WORDS

accept
accommodate
acquaint
acquire
adolescence
advice
advise
affect
all right
a lot
already
argument
beginning
believe
beside
break
breathe
business
calendar
cannot
capital
career
character
choice
choose
chose
completely
conceive
conscience
conscientious
conscious
controlled
controlling
convenience
council
counsel
counselor
criticism
criticize
curiosity
curious
definitely
dependent
desirability
despair
disappoint
disastrous
discipline
effect
eighth
environment
equipped
exaggerate
except
experience
fantasies
fascinate
fictitious
field
foreign
forty
fourth
friendliness
fulfill
government
governor
grammar
guarantee
height
heroes
hypocrite
immediately
independent
interest
interfere
interrupt
it's
its
jewelry
judgment
knowledge
led
leisure
length
license
likelihood
liveliest
loneliness
lonely
lose
maintenance
marriage
mathematics
mischief
moral
morale
necessary
ninety
noticeable
obstacle
occasion
occurred
occurrence
occurring
opportunity
parallel
particular
passed
past
perform
personnel
piece
possess
practical
precede
preferred
prejudice
principal
principle
privilege
proceed
professor
quiet
receive
referring
relieve
reminisce
rhythm
roommate
sense
separate
sergeant
shining
similar
since
sophomore
strength
subtle
success
suppose
surprise
temperature
than
their
then
there
therefore
they're
threw
through
to
too
transferred
truly
unconscious
unfortunately
until
usually
vacuum
vegetable
weight
weird
where
whether
whole
whose
without
woman
written
yield
you're
your

Sound-alike Words

1. A, An, And

A is an article used before a noun or noun phrase beginning with a consonant sound:

> *A* violet is a small purple flower.

An is an article used before a noun or noun phrase beginning with a vowel sound:

> *An* owl hunts at night.

And is a coordinating conjunction and so links words:

> Minks *and* ermines are both members of the weasel family.

2. Accept/Except

Accept means "to receive":

> Ana *accepted* the key to the city.

Except means "excluding," "other than," or "but":

> The mayor would have offered Ana a car *except* he didn't have one to give her.

3. Advice/Advise

Advice means "an opinion or suggestion":

> Bob should listen to the *advice* of his friends.

A*dvise* means "to counsel or give a suggestion":

> They *advised* Bob to speak respectfully to the officer.

4. Affect/Effect

Affect means "to influence or change":

> The ice storm *affected* Kurt's travel plans.

Effect means "the result"—and occasionally means "to cause something":

> The *effect* of the storm was that Kurt had to postpone his trip.

5. All Ready/Already

All ready means "prepared":

> Are you *all ready* to start gardening?

Already means "before" or "by this time":

> We have *already* begun turning over the soil.

6. Are/Our

Are is the present tense of *to be*:

> Will and Lois *are* on the dance floor.

Our means "belonging to us":

> They *are* dancing near *our* table.

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7. Beside/Besides

Beside means "next to":

Burt drives with his coffee *beside* him.

Besides means "in addition to" or "except for":

Besides his coffee he also has a box of doughnuts.

8. Brake/Break

Brake means "to stop"; also, it names a device for stopping:

It is good practice to *brake* when nearing an intersection.

Break means "to separate something into pieces or destroy it":

Fine crystal is too easy to *break*.

9. Breath/Breathe

Breath means "the air we inhale":

Finishing the 10K, Kina was still not short of *breath*.

Breathe means "the act of filling our lungs with air":

She did need to *breathe* a little more deeply.

10. Choose/Chose

Choose means "to select":

"Sheila, which of the candidates will you *choose*?"

Chose is the past tense of *choose*:

Sheila *chose* the one with the most consistent voting record.

11. Clothes/Cloths

Clothes means "something to wear":

Amy has on her party *clothes*.

Cloths means "fabric":

Molly always washes and reuses her cleaning cloths.

12. Conscience/Conscious

Conscience means "an inner sense of ethical behavior":

Natalie's *conscience* was clear.

Conscious means "to be awake or aware":

She was *conscious* that her conscience was clear.

13. Do/Due

Do means "to perform":

We have to *do* the standard maintenance on the car today.

Due means "owing or expected to arrive":

The mortgage payment was *due* on the first of each month.

14. Farther/Further

Farther describes distance:

San Francisco is *farther* from us than Denver.

Further means "additional":

Heather said that the drawing needed *further* work.

15. Hear/Here

Hear means "sensing a sound":

I like to *hear* mockingbirds imitate other bird calls.

Here refers to a place:

It is common to hear these birds *here* in the country.

16. Its/It's

Its indicates ownership by a thing or animal:

The dragon is shooting flames from *its* mouth.

It's is the contraction for *it is*:

It's beating its wings and rising into the sky.

17. Lead/Led

Lead means "metal," "to guide," or "to be in front of":

Lead is about as soft as gold.

Milo knows best how to *lead* the troop.

Led is the past tense of *lead*:

Milo has a lot of experience, so he *led* the way.

18. Loose/Lose

Loose means "unrestrained":

Roxy, the neighbor dog, often gets *loose* from her yard.

Lose means "to misplace":

One day when she gets loose, she may *lose* her way back home.

19. Past/Passed

Past means "time before now":

Marilyn said, "Let's leave that issue in the *past*."

Passed is the past tense of the verb *to pass*, meaning "to go by":

We *passed* the drugstore at some point in the past.

20. Quiet/Quite

Quiet means "silent":

The crying baby was finally *quiet*.

Quite means "very":

With the baby sleeping, we found the quiet house *quite* restful.

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21. Sit/Set

Sit means "to be seated":

He chose to *sit* in the back of the class.

Set means "to place something":

He wanted to sit where he could *set* his coffee on an empty desk.

22. Suppose/Supposed (to)

Suppose means "to assume or guess":

I *suppose* interest rates will rise soon.

Supposed can be the past tense of *suppose* but, combined with *to*, usually means "ought to":

The rates are *supposed* to remain stable for a few months.

23. Their/There/They're

Their indicates ownership by more than one:

The wilderness belongs to the people. It is *their* land.

There refers to a place:

You will find a sign-up sheet over *there*.

They're is the contraction for *they are*:

They're signing up to help with the school carnival.

24. Then/Than

Then means "afterward" or "at that time":

Joseph will have lunch and *then* have dessert.

Than indicates that a comparison is being made:

However, he would rather have two desserts *than* lunch.

25. Through/Threw/Thru

Through means "moving from one side to another" or "finished":

Hank drove *through* the Eisenhower Tunnel.

Thru is a commercial shortening of *through* and is used to name a place of business that people briefly pass through. *Thru* should not be used as a synonym for *through*:

For lunch he decided to drive through the drive-*thru* at Wendy's.

Threw is the past tense of *throw*:

When Hank passed through the drive-thru, he *threw* some money to the cashier.

26. To/Too/Two

To means "toward" or marks an infinitive (e.g., *to* talk):

Natasha rode her bike *to* the soccer fields.

Too means "also" or "very":

Natasha was not *too* late to see her brother score a goal.

Two is a number:

She was too late to see him score the first *two* times.

27. Use/Used

Use means "to operate or work with something" (*used* is the past tense):

Ian wanted to *use* the car that his brother had *used* last evening.

Used, followed by *to*, means "to be accustomed to":

However, Ian's father was not *used* to loaning the family car to either of them.

28. Whose/Who's

Whose shows ownership:

Mark asked *whose* car was parked in the driveway.

Who's is a contraction for *who is* or *who has*:

His sister is the one *who's* going to have to move it.

29. Were/Where

Were is the past tense of *are*:

People *were* discussing the effectiveness of carbon credits.

Where indicates a place:

People were discussing *where* carbon credits would be most useful.

30. Your/You're

Your shows ownership:

Your plan seems to be working.

You're is a contraction for *you are*:

You're sure that your plan is working?



For Activity 17.6, the announcer should also have a dictionary on hand. Then if spellers want to hear a word's definition or a sample sentence, the announcer can look up the word.



ACTIVITY 17.6 WORKING TOGETHER: *Identifying Problem Words*



Gather in a small group; make sure you have at least one copy of this textbook. Assign one person to be the announcer. As he or she reads from the list of frequently misspelled words on page 248, other group members (with textbooks closed) will spell the words in their journals or on separate paper. After 15 words, the announcer should join the spellers and give his or her position to another person in the group. Keep going until everyone in the group has announced 15 words. At the end, trade and check each other's work against the list; add the words you've misspelled to your Improvement Chart.

ACTIVITY 17.7 *Editing for Spelling and Sound-alike Errors*

The following essay excerpt has many spelling and sound-alike errors. Applying the rules from this chapter—and using a dictionary—find each error, cross it out, and write the correct spelling in the space above it. The first sentence has been corrected as an example.

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Paradoxically ~~Paradoxicaly~~, both sides of the pesticides-in-produce issue dispute the information in the EPA ~~broshure~~ brochure. According to a recent Reuters press release, the American Crop Protection Association, representing agricultural chemical manufacturs, says that the broshure wrongly leads consumers to beleive that all produce is unsafe because of pesticides. On the other side of the isshue, a pro-organic orgnization, the Enviromental Working Group, feels that the broshure weekly sidesteps the full significance of pestiside risks. Although charged with protecting the enviroment, the EPA often dose not ban toxic contaminats. In such cases as dioxin, PCBs, Malathion, and chlordane, the EPA acted only after significant damage to the enviroment and to people's health had already occured. With the large chemical conglomerates on one side, the radicle "tree-hugers" on the other, and the slow-moving bureaucratic EPA in the middle, it is difficult for the average consumer to know were to way in on the isshue of pesticides and their affect on our deit. Proving a corelation between pestiside residue on foods and resulting diseas is a complex task. Both sides agre that pestisides are highly toxic poisons. But at the root of the disagrement betwein the pro-pesticide and anti-pesticide proponents is were to draw the line at what constitutes a harmful does of pesticides. It is eazy to see a short-term, high-does affect when locusts are killed in a wheat feild but harder to establish a link betwien canser and a low-does, prolonged exposure to pestisides.

Opponets of pesticides point to increasing rates of birth defects, premature births, and allergeis, particularly asma, in young children. Additionaly, statistics indicate that populations in the southern states bordering the Mississippi River have a much hire cancur rate than those living elsewere in the United States and that the trend is increasing. Some scientists speculate that this increased canser rate is related to the acummulation of pesticides in the Mississippi from major rivers that consentrate pestisides in the Missisippi as it flows toward the Gulf.

Shoud we continu to reli on the asurances of the same industries that extoled the safety of chemicals such as dioxin, Malathion, and DDT? The farmers who

releid on DDT where not aware that the chemical had seepped into the water and the food chain to the point that the balled eagle and the California condor where all but whiped out. Althouh these bird populations have recovered some what in the 30 years sense DDT has been baned, the condor, especialy, is still on the brink of extincshun.

Rachel Carson sounded a warning in her landmark DDT-era book, *Silent Spring*, that applies even today:

> The "control of nature" is a phrase concieved in arrogance . . . [at a time] when it was supposed that nature exists for the conveneince of man. It is our alarming misfortune that so primitive a sceince has armed it self with the most modern and terrible weapons, that in turning them against the insexs it has also turned them against the earth.

Will we discover in hind site that a chemical being use today will, like DDT and others, prove to have unforescene and disasterous affects?

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ACTIVITY 17.8 WORKING ONLINE: *Spelling Practice*

Go to http://literacy.kent.edu/Midwest/Materials/ndakota/spelling/toc.html for a series of practice quizzes focusing on homonyms, various endings, and commonly misspelled words. The site also includes corresponding lessons, answer keys, and ten word lists.



ACTIVITY 17.9 WORKING ONLINE: *Spelling under Pressure*

Good spelling comes in handy during Hangman. At http://www.quia.com/hm/128852.html, spell words correctly to avoid the noose.



ACTIVITY 17.10 WORKING ONLINE: *Spelling Review*

To test the spelling rules (and exceptions) covered here, take the Chapter 17 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



Chapter Summary

1. Being able to spell according to accepted conventions is an important writing skill.
2. Because many English spellings are not phonetic, knowing a few spelling patterns and memorizing frequently misspelled words will help with spelling conventions.
3. Using a dictionary is an important habit to develop in spelling correctly.
4. Editing for spelling is best done slowly—word by word, syllable by syllable.
5. Using pattern words, similar in number of syllables and endings, can help you spell words that you are unsure of.
6. Sound-alike words must be memorized to be spelled correctly.
7. To become a better speller, start a chart to track your own misspelled words. Study the words often, and test yourself on them until you can spell them correctly.

ESL Concerns

18

[*If English is not your native language, what is the biggest challenge you face (or have faced) in learning it? Compare or contrast this challenge with an issue in your native language. If English is your native language, what do you find most challenging about it, grammatically or stylistically? Answer in a paragraph.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Count and noncount nouns
- Articles
- Verbs
- Prepositions
- Adjective order

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Learning a new language can be difficult and frustrating. It takes much study and practice to accumulate a vocabulary, acquire basic grammar skills, and learn the small, often inconsistent differences in usage that exist among different languages. Writing is even more challenging because it formalizes the spoken word and follows the rules—stricter than those used in informal speech—that most writers in a culture have agreed on.

All of the information contained in this text—particularly in Units Two, Three, and Six—will help you speak and write American English more fluently. However, if English is not your first language, you may have many questions that do not occur to native speakers, who have internalized most of their grammar during their childhood, just as you have done with your first language. Although it contains useful information for all students, this chapter is designed mainly to answer questions for those of you who are not yet as comfortable with English as with your first or native language. Chapter 18 will help you especially with nouns, verbs, articles, idiomatic prepositional phrases, and multiple adjectives.

Count and Noncount Nouns

In Chapter 6 we learned that **nouns** name a person (*Vijay*), place (*Mexico City*), object (*hammer*), concept (*ecosystem*), emotional state (*fear*), or quality (*courage*). Among several other properties of nouns is the distinction between **count** and **noncount** nouns.

Count Nouns

Count nouns can be quantified or enumerated; we can count two *trees*, *cell phones*, *songs*, or *shoes*. A determiner (see the following list) should be placed before count nouns when they are singular and often when they are plural.

DETERMINERS

Articles:	a, an, the
Possessive nouns:	Ahmadi's, Marquita's, your brother's
Demonstrative pronouns:	this, these, that, those
Possessive pronouns:	his, her, my, your, its, our, their, whose
Indefinite pronouns:	some, several, many, much, few, more, most, all, both, any, neither, either, every, each, no, enough
Numbers:	one, two, three, . . .

Here are several sentences showing a *count noun* preceded by determiners:

1. A *dog* **can be a good companion.**
2. My brother's *dog* **is well behaved.**
3. The *dogs* **in my neighbor's yard are barking.**
4. These *dogs* **have become pests.**

It would be incorrect to drop the determiners from sentences 1 and 2. For example, in English we can't say "dog can be a good companion." We must include a determiner, in this case the article *a*. While sentences 3 and 4 could be

written without the determiners, it would change the meaning of the sentences. As written, *the* and *these* refer to specific, known dogs.

Noncount Nouns

Noncount nouns are usually difficult or impossible to count—*air, light, meat, water, dust*—and do not have a plural form. For example, notice the difference in meaning between the *change* (noncount) in someone's pocket and the *changes* (count) you went through when you came to the United States. You may occasionally run into a noncount noun that is used with a countable meaning, for example: "The espresso bar offers a dozen exotic *coffees*." Noncount nouns may or may not be preceded by a determiner.

1. Roza mixed honey (not *honeys*) in her tea.
2. Antonio spilled some *coffee* (not *coffees*) on the table.
3. Roza mixed two tablespoons of *honey* in her tea.
4. Antonio spilled some hot *coffee* (not *coffees*) on the table.

Sentence 1 shows the noun *honey* without a determiner, whereas sentence 2 uses the determiner *some.* In sentence 3 you can see how to show a plural with a noncount noun by adding quantifying words, in this case *two tablespoons* (a count noun with a determiner). Sentence 4 shows that modifiers (*hot*) can come between a determiner (*some*) and a noun.

While count nouns can be enumerated and noncount nouns cannot, count nouns often form a more specific group contained within a noncount group, as in the following list:

COUNT	NONCOUNT
essay	homework
cars	traffic
yen	money
mountains	scenery



One way to identify count nouns is to try the word *many* in front of them. Can you say *many cars*? Yes, so *cars* is a count noun. Can you say *many traffic*? No, so *traffic* is a noncount noun. You can also try the word *much* in front of a noun. If you can say *much traffic*, you have identified a noncount noun.

ACTIVITY 18.1 *Identifying Count and Noncount Nouns*

Identify each of the following words as count or noncount nouns.

EXAMPLE: stone: count

1. flower	2. economics
3. oil	4. backpack
5. wheat	6. smog
7. cow	8. French
9. carpet	10. DVD
11. nail	12. pen
13. flour	14. snow
15. cookie	16. swimming

Articles

There are three *articles* in English that are often placed in front of nouns: the definite article *the* and the indefinite articles *a* and *an*. Although using articles in English can be tricky, there are guidelines that will help you in most instances.

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The is used to refer to a *specific* person, place, or thing; *a* or *an* is used when the noun's identity is *general* or unknown to the reader.

Choosing between the and a or an

To determine which article to use, you need to know whether the noun is count or noncount, general or specific, and plural or singular. The following sentences illustrate the use of general versus specific articles:

1. **General:** *A* game of soccer is a good workout.
2. **Specific:** *The* game we played this afternoon wore me out.

Sentence 1 speaks about soccer games in general and so uses *a* whereas sentence 2 refers to a specific game and so uses *the*.

A noun is often introduced in writing or speaking using *a* or *an*. Then, after being identified for the reader or listener, it is referred to with *the*.

3. We went to *a* good movie this afternoon.
4. *The* movie had a great plot and terrific special effects.

Sentence 4 uses *the* before *movie* because the writer mentioned *movie* in sentence 3 and now expects the reader to know which movie is being referred to.

If a plural count or a noncount noun is general, do not use any article, for example:

General plural count noun: *Airplanes* often need to be de-iced in the winter.

General noncount noun: *Water* is necessary for life.

The articles *a* and *an* are used only before singular count nouns (*a* bus, not *a* busses).

English Review Note

Noncount nouns never use a or an: We want cheese (not a cheese) on the hamburger.

RULES FOR ARTICLE USE

Count/Noncount Noun	General	Specific
Singular count noun: car, bird, apple	Use *a* or *an*	Use *the*
Plural count noun: cars, birds, apples	Use no article	Use *the*
Noncount noun: weather, advice, flour	Use no article	Use *the*

Choosing between a and an

The article *a* is used before words beginning with a consonant (*a* fork, *a* cabinet) whereas *an* is used before words beginning with a vowel (*an* orange, *an* avocado).

Some nouns begin with a silent consonant followed by a vowel and so require the article *an* (*an* hourly report, *an* honorable woman). Other nouns begin with vowels that are pronounced like consonants and so require the article *a* (*a* used car, *a* U-turn).

ACTIVITY 18.2 *Using Articles*

Find the article errors in the following paragraph. Cross out any incorrect articles and add those that are missing by writing them in the space above the line. The first sentence has been corrected as an example.

The b

^Best solution for dealing with a people who drink and drive is for ~~an~~ automo-

a

bile manufacturers to install alcohol-sensing devices that will prevent ^drunk

driver from starting his or her car. Technology has advanced the great deal in a past few years, and the alcohol-sensing devices have been developed. In fact, California already uses these devices to help control the repeat DUI offenders, and the alcohol-related traffic accidents have dropped significantly as the result. Device is simple, inexpensive, and unobtrusive. People can have their blood alcohol measured simply by breathing into the tube as they sit in a driver's seat. If they pass, off they go. If they fail, a car won't start. Of course, it will be inconvenient for person who is too drunk to pass breath analysis test; he or she will have to find ride. But a delay and inconvenience of calling the friend or the cab is far better than barreling out onto a crowded freeway at 1:00 a.m. and then into the bridge abutment or, worse, other cars.

Verbs

As we discussed in Unit Two, **verbs** are the heart of writing, combining with subjects (nouns or pronouns) to create grammatical sentences. All sentences in English require a verb and a subject (though the subject may only be implied in a command, as in "Shut the door, please"). Verbs have three simple tenses—past, present, and future—and must agree in person and number with their subject:

Abdul is studying, but his brothers are watching TV.

Here are some suggestions for handling verb questions common to ESL writers.



Chapters 3–5 can help you identify and use verbs correctly.

Word Order

Verbs generally come after subjects in sentences:

Sami works hard.

However, remember that for **questions**, sentence word order may change:

Will you come to dinner?

Inverted sentences move the subject close to or all the way to the end of the sentence:

Into the operating room walked the surgeon.

Helping verbs precede action verbs in a verb phrase:

Sami *will* work today.

A verb phrase may be separated by other words:

Sami will *not* work today.

Three Irregular Verbs: *To Do, to Have, and to Be*

Two irregular verbs that can work as either helper verbs or action verbs are *to do* (forms: *do, does, did,* and *done*) and *to have* (forms: *have, has, had*).

Action verb: Choden *did* the bills for the month. (meaning "completed the job")

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Helping verb: Alek *did* go home for Christmas. (emphasizes *go*)

Action verb: Jurgis *had* only $50 to live on until Friday. (meaning "possessed")

Helping verb: He *had* hoped to have $150. (past perfect tense of *hope*)

Using *to do*

When used as a helping verb, *to do*, in all its forms, can help with questions, express a negative, and emphasize an action verb:

Question: Where *do* you think you will go?

Negative: I *do* not like cooked spinach.

Emphasizer: Amil *does* plan on graduating this semester.

Using *to be*

The irregular verb *to be* (forms: *am, are, is, was, were, been, being*) can work as either a verb that expresses state of being (linking verb) or a helping verb:

State of being: Javier *is* a neurosurgeon. (links the subject, Javier, to the noun complement, *neurosurgeon*)

Javier *is* intelligent. (links *Javier* to the adjective complement, *intelligent*)

Helping verb: Emilia *is* painting her home office today. (present progressive tense of *paint*)

ACTIVITY 18.3 *Choosing Forms of to Be, to Do, and to Have*

In the spaces below write the correct form of the verbs *to be, to do,* and *to have*.

EXAMPLE: Seth *did* (to do) the laundry but forgot to fold the clothes.

1. Chung _____ (to do) the mulching while Diem mowed the yard.
2. The humidity _____ (to be) so high that we sweated standing still.
3. The phones _____ (to have) not been working since the windstorm.
4. Dmitr _____ (to have) two hours of free time before the plane arrived.
5. Mischa _____ (to do) show Carol how to barbecue chicken.
6. Saltwater crocodiles _____ (to be) deadly predators.
7. The yellow Labrador _____ (to have) a problem with shedding.
8. All of Fran's relatives _____ (to do) think that she will become a lawyer.

Modals

Other verbs that function as helpers are often called **modals**: *may/might, can/could, will/would, shall/should, must*. These helping verbs express requests, doubt, capability, necessity, and advisability:

Request: *Would (will, could, can)* you open the window?

Doubt: I *might (may)* stay home from work today.

Capability: I *could (can)* go fishing instead of work!

Necessity: Marisha *must* reach the bus stop by 4:00 p.m.

Advisability: People *should* reduce or stop smoking to save their lungs.

Modals create shades of meaning and so are useful in making requests. For example, while watching TV, we could demand, "Hand me the remote," or we

could make our command more a request by using a modal: "Would you hand me the remote?"

The base form of a verb always follows the modal, so be careful not to use the past tense or an infinitive:

Not this: Fayina *should worked* out her problem with her friend.

But this: Fayina *should work* out her problem with her friend.

Not this: They *may to save* their relationship if they try.

But this: They *may save* their relationship if they try.

ACTIVITY 18.4 *Practicing Modals*

In the following sentences write the modal that expresses the meaning in parentheses.

1. The stereo is too loud. _____ you please turn it down? (request)
2. Annze _____ do a double somersault off the high dive. (capability)
3. If the ice storm does pass through, you _____ salt your driveway. (advisability)
4. Multinational corporations _____ stop paying workers less than the minimum wage set by those workers' governments. (necessity)
5. Someday Nigeria _____ insist on stricter pollution controls in the extraction of its oil. (doubt)
6. The United States _____ take the lead in caring for the health of the planet. (advisability)
7. If the Congress had the will, the United States _____ make the world an immeasurably better place to live within a generation. (capability)
8. Huyen _____ make it to the concert. (doubt)

Stative Verbs

Stative verbs indicate that a subject will remain in a certain state for some time. For example, we might say, "Samir knows that his family loves him." This sentence tells us that Samir knows that his family cares deeply for him and is not likely to stop caring for him in the near future. Therefore, we call "to know" a stative verb. This class of verbs usually cannot use the present progressive, so it would be incorrect to write, "Samir *is knowing* that his family loves him."



Stative verbs usually do not use the present progressive tense.

COMMON STATIVE VERBS

be	hate	love	resemble
believe	have	mean	think
belong	know	need	understand
cost	like	own	weigh

Several verbs can be either stative or **active**, depending on their meaning. *Weigh* and *look* are two such verbs. When functioning as active verbs, these verbs can use the present progressive tense, for example:

Active use: Sarah *is looking* for her friend in the roller rink.

Stative use: Sarah *looks* as if she is lost.

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ACTIVITY 18.5 *Choosing Active vs. Stative Verbs*

In the following sentences underline the correct form in the verb pairs in parentheses. Refer to the preceding chart for help, and remember that some verbs can be either stative or active, depending on their meaning.

EXAMPLE: The students (were hating/hated) the thought of more homework.

1. Saiching (is liking/likes) the cool fall weather.
2. Brett Favre (is promoting/promotes) Lee jeans regularly on late night TV.
3. The next-door neighbors (were having/have) trouble getting their car started today.
4. The neighbors (are having/have) a 1970 Cutlass with 150,000 miles on it.
5. There are many who (are arguing/argue) that China needs to take more steps to protect the environment.
6. Many also (are believing/believe) that the United States should do more to limit its global pollution.
7. Jake's stupid stunts (are belonging/belong) on the reality show *Whacked Out Sports*.
8. Soledad (is needing/needs) a ride to work this morning.

English Review Note

Phrasal verbs are often informal and idiomatic.

Two-Word (Phrasal) Verbs

Another potentially confusing verb is the **two-part** or **phrasal verb**, which follows a verb with a preposition or an adverb, such as *to call back, to check out*, or *to hang up*. These verbs usually express a different idea than they would without the attached preposition or adverb, so they can be difficult to understand if thought of literally, especially for those whose first language is not English. For example, if we said, "The English teacher *dragged out* his explanation for 30 minutes," we wouldn't mean that the explanation had literally been pulled around the room; we would mean that the teacher had prolonged her explanation.

Most phrasal verbs consisting of a main verb and an adverb can either be split or remain attached:

Split: Paul will *pull* the weeds *up* from his garden today.

Attached: Paul will *pull up* the weeds from his garden today.

However, when a pronoun is used as the object, it must be placed *between* the two verb parts, as in the split example below:

Correct: Paul will *pull* them *up* today.

Incorrect: Paul will *pull up* them today.

Many phrasal verbs consisting of a main verb and a preposition are nonseparable, as in the following example:

After that, Paul will *get through* the rest of his chores.

We use many phrasal verbs in informal conversation that we would avoid in more formal writing. Often, a more concise substitute can be found; for example:

Phrasal verb: The football coach was trying to *get across* the plays to his team.

Substitute: The football coach was trying to *explain* the plays to his team.

SEPARABLE TWO-PART VERBS

Verb	Meaning...	Example
figure out	solve	We should try to *figure* the problem *out*. (or *figure out*)
fix up	repair	Daniela can *fix* her room *up* with a little paint. (or *fix up*)
get across	explain	Dad thought he could *get* the idea *across* to me. (etc.)
give up	quit	Yeshe needs to *give* doughnuts *up*.
hand in	submit	Faculty members *handed* their schedules *in*.
help out	assist	Relatives *help* one another *out* when they need to.
lead on	entice, deceive	Some people unconsciously *lead* others *on*.
look up	search for	*Look* the name *up* on the Internet.
make up	invent, redo	Janina *made* the exam *up* that she had missed.
name for	give a name	His parents *named* Moze *for* his grandfather.
pick out	choose	Petras *picked* a sweater *out* that he liked.
point out	to show	Raul *pointed* the late time *out* to his sister.
put off	delay	The workers *put* the job *off* until Friday.
put on	dress	Tuyen *put* her warm wool socks *on*.
put up	build	The construction crew *put* the house *up* in one month.
put together	construct	Chuon *put* a dollhouse *together* for his daughter.
shut off	stop something	Kiri *shut* the bath water *off*.
take off	remove	Diego *took* his work boots *off*.
think over	consider	The union will *think* the proposal *over*.
turn on	start something	"Laura, will you *turn* the light *on*?"



For more on idiomatic and overworked expressions, see Chapter 33.

NONSEPARABLE TWO-PART VERBS

Verb	Meaning...	Example
count on	trust	Hao knew that he could *count on* Ly.
get over	recover from	It is hard to *get over* a broken heart.
get through	complete	Elzbieta *got through* with her report early.
get up	arise	We *got up* late but still went to breakfast.
go over	review	It is best to *go over* the chapter before the test.
look after	take care of	No one said Dara would *look after* the store.

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look into	investigate	I hope you *look into* the overcharges.
look out (for)	care for, alert to	Mice must *look out for* owls.
pass away	die	Tazim mourned when his mother *passed away*.
put up with	tolerate	We could not *put up with* the mice in the attic.
run away	flee	Thuyet *ran away* from the bully.
run into	meet accidentally	Sandy *ran into* Mary Grace at the conference.
run out (of)	finish a supply	The printer *ran out of* ink today.
show up	appear	Maija *showed up* late for her interview.
take after	resemble	His mother says that Pasha *takes after* his uncle.



Refer to the preceding chart for help. Remember that sometimes the verb parts will be separated.

ACTIVITY 18.6 *Finding Phrasal Verbs*

In the following sentences, underline the phrasal verbs.

EXAMPLE: If people work together, they can bring about change.

1. "Pick the DVD out that you want to watch," said Xuan.
2. Selma said that she would get over the breakup soon.
3. The construction crew put the new building together almost overnight.
4. Majid's parents look after their children more carefully than do most parents.
5. The indigenous people of Haiti should have run away from Columbus.
6. Trying to save energy (and money), Natasha told her children, "Turn the lights off!"
7. After the fourth call in one day, I could not put up with the telemarketer.
8. If I had his home phone number, I would call him up ten times today to see how he would like it.



For more on prepositions, see Chapter 9.

Prepositions

Prepositions are words that link nouns and pronouns to sentences. As in the phrasal verbs in the preceding section, prepositions are often part of **idiomatic expressions** (phrases that may ignore grammar rules and that have a meaning beyond the literal definition of the words they contain). Many prepositions help show location (*near, around, against, beside*), some indicate time (*until, during, for, since*), and some can mean either time or location (*on, in, by, at*).

Prepositions of Place

There are many prepositions of location, but the ones that can most often cause us problems are *on, in, by,* and *at*.

On tells us where something rests or is positioned:

The glass is *on* the counter.

The hat is *on* her head.

Linh's apartment is *on* Metcalf Street.

In tells us that something is contained, surrounded, or enveloped:

The three friends were together *in* a restaurant.

Marko was floating *in* the swimming pool.

Aleksandra was *in* a great mood today.

By tells us that one person or thing is next to another:

Maisa is sitting *by* the fountain.

Boys race their skateboards in the street *by* my house.

At tells about one person or thing in relation to another:

We found powdered milk *at* the grocery store.

Cesar left his BMW *at* a shop for an oil change.

ACTIVITY 18.7 *Choosing Prepositions of Place*

In the following sentences, determine whether the prepositions *on, in, by,* and *at* are used to show location correctly. If the sentence contains no preposition errors, mark *C* in the space provided. Otherwise, cross out the incorrect preposition, and write the correct one above it.

EXAMPLE: Abasi walked in from the hall, placed his keys ~~by~~ *on* the table, and said, "I'm happy to spend the evening ~~in~~ *at* home."

1. ___ Tabia looked by the clock on the wall and thought that she should be on bed.
2. ___ Rushing to arrive in the ballet, Tuyen realized she had on a sweater two sizes too small.
3. ___ Hummingbirds occasionally land in my feeder, but mostly they hover on the air by it.
4. ___ The quarterback felt pressured on the playoffs.
5. ___ Neil advised, "When by fog, focus your flashlight in the ground."
6. ___ By the shopping center in Second Street, turn left on Roe and then turn on the first parking lot entrance.
7. ___ Climbing on a loose scree slope is dangerous.
8. ___ California has established twenty-nine protected marine sanctuaries by the ocean in the coast.

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Prepositions of Time

There are only a few prepositions that indicate time (including *until, till, during, for,* and *since*), but the ones that are particularly troublesome are those that overlap with location: *on, in, by,* and *at*.

On tells about a specific day or date:

The mortgage payment is due *on* May 31.

The couple will be here *on* Saturday for lunch.

In tells about relatively specific time periods, such as mornings, afternoons, evenings, minutes, hours, days, months, years, and seasons:

Ginny's dad will help her with homework *in* the late afternoon.

In five more minutes, you can watch TV.

By tells "at this point in time":

Kim said he would leave school *by* 2:00.

By 2:30 he should be home.

At tells about a specific time:

Hien took her daughter to jazz dance class *at* 6:00 p.m.

Several of us agreed to meet *at* 1:00.

ACTIVITY 18.8 Choosing Prepositions of Time

In the following sentences, determine whether the prepositions *on*, *in*, *by*, and *at* are used to show time correctly. If the sentence contains no preposition errors, mark *C* in the space provided. Otherwise, cross out the incorrect preposition, and write the correct one above it.

EXAMPLE: I left home ~~on~~ *at* 8:00 to reach the doctor's office ~~in~~ *by* 8:30, but the traffic ~~by~~ *at* rush hour made me late.

1. ___ On Sunday we slept late on the morning.
2. ___ In about 10 minutes Adam must be at the bus stop.
3. ___ In midnight ghosts and goblins are said to be in the streets on Halloween.
4. ___ In the time we reach the top of the hill, we will be at the midpoint of the climb.
5. ___ We are leaving by a little while, but in the meantime, why not finish putting on your makeup?
6. ___ Fathi was at his job early enough on the morning to have coffee in the cafeteria and still begin work on time.

7. __ In ice storms, especially at night, people should drive slowly and look for "black" ice on the road.

8. ___ Peter was supposed to meet Valeria in 5:00, but he made it by 5:15.

Idiomatic Phrases

Convention has established the use of certain prepositions to follow adjectives and verbs. When we substitute a different preposition, the phrase becomes non-standard English. The only way to become fluent with idiomatic phrases is to listen carefully to native speakers, read extensively, and memorize the phrases that are new to you or that your instructor marks on your papers.



Start and continue to keep a list of idiomatic phrases that are new to you.

COMMON PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

abide *by* a decision	apologize *for* an accident	concerned *about* (*with*) illness
abide *in* Georgia	argue *with* a teacher	connected *to* business
absent *from* work	arrive *at* school	count *on* family
accuse *of* stealing	aware *of* a mistake	decide *on* a new life
acquainted *with* him	believe *in* yourself	independent *of* parents
addicted *to* cigarettes	blame *for* a bad joke	interested *in* issues
afraid *of* spiders	bored *with* (*by*) the lecture	proud *of* a daughter
agree *with* a friend	capable *of* speaking	responsible *for* a cat
agree *to* a proposal	charge *for* dinner	rewarded *by* a boss
angry *with* a pet	comply *with* commands	rewarded *for* responsibility

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ACTIVITY 18.9 *Choosing Idiomatic Prepositions*



Refer to the previous list for help with Activity 18.9.

In each of the following sentences, determine whether the idiomatic prepositions are used correctly. If the sentence contains no preposition errors, mark *C* in the space provided. Otherwise, cross out the incorrect preposition, and write the correct one above it.

EXAMPLE: We promised to abide ~~with~~ *by* the judge's decision.

1. __ We were all interested on the coming elections.

2. __ Kama was bored in the party and wanted to leave.

3. __ Most people like to be rewarded around good deeds.

4. __ Tara did not agree with the company's hiring policies.

5. __ After they arrived to the game room, Benito and Carlos played table tennis all afternoon.

6. __ By the time they finish high school, most teens want to be independent with their parents.

7. __ Isabel knew that she could always count in family for help.

8. __ No one was more afraid with snakes than Amir.

Adjective Order

Adjectives describe nouns and pronouns and are generally placed before them in a sentence (*silly* boy, *green* trees). When you use more than one adjective, the resulting word group gathers meaning as it moves closer to the noun or pronoun it describes (*an interesting glass* bottle). There is a preferred order of adjectives, according to their type:

ADJECTIVE ORDER

Determiners:	this, these, that, the, a, an, some, many, my, our, your, all, both, each, several, one, two, etc.
Judgment:	unusual, interesting, impressive, ugly, beautiful, inspiring, hopeful, smart, funny
Size:	large, massive, small, tiny, heavy, light, tall, short
Shape:	round, square, rectangular, wide, deep, thin, slim, fat
Age:	young, adolescent, teenage, middle-aged, old, ancient
Color:	white, black, blue, red, yellow, green
Proper noun derivatives:	American, German, Kansan, Parisian, Gothic
Material:	wood, plastic, cloth, paper, cardboard, metal, stone, clay, glass, ceramic
Nouns used as adjectives:	*coffee* mug, *water* bottle, *pencil* sharpener, *pick* ax

Here are several combinations of adjectives:

DETERMINER/JUDGMENT/AGE/NOUN USED AS ADJECTIVE

The impressive new marine sanctuary northwest of Hawaii offers habitat to thousands of species.

DETERMINER/JUDGMENT/SIZE

Many unusual small mushrooms appeared in Dawa's yard overnight.

DETERMINER/SIZE/SHAPE/PROPER NOUN DERIVATIVE

One small square French pastry was left on the tray.

The adjectives above add meaning to each other as they move toward the noun they describe; therefore, we call these **cumulative** adjectives, which do not need commas. On the other hand, adjectives that modify or describe a noun or pronoun equally are **coordinate** and *do* require a comma between them (*funny, inspiring* poetry). In general, avoid "stacking" adjectives in front of nouns and pronouns. Using more than two or three modifiers at one time overloads the word you are describing. Try spreading the modifiers around within several sentences for better effect.



For more on single-word adjectives, adjective phrases, and adjective clauses, see Chapter 8.

ACTIVITY 18.10 *Ordering Adjectives*

In each of the following sentences, rearrange the adjectives so their order is appropriate.

lightweight black winter

EXAMPLE: Jasmin wanted a ~~winter lightweight black~~ coat.

1. ___ Dinh found a round tiny milky-white pebble.
2. ___ In the museum we admired an clay elegant Japanese sculpture.
3. ___ These German old draft horses can plow a field faster than some tractors can.
4. ___ We settled down to read a paperback slender fast-moving novel.
5. ___ Aleksi was interested in buying a silver midsize hybrid automobile.
6. ___ This French inspiring old watercolor, thought Dorota, belongs in my living room.
7. ___ There are still some small unusual colonies of elkhorn coral left in the Caribbean.
8. ___ A large devastating tropical storm moved through south Florida today.

ACTIVITY 18.11 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Adjectives Effectively and Avoiding Overuse*

With a partner or partners, go through the sentences in Activity 18.10, and see where adjectives could be omitted for clarity's sake. Each time you remove an adjective, explain why you did so. Are there any sentences that might benefit from adding an adjective? If so, add appropriate descriptors, making sure to use correct adjective order.



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ACTIVITY 18.12 **WORKING ONLINE: *ESL Concerns Review***

At www.mhhe.com/brannan, take the Chapter 18 Review Quiz to test yourself on English usage of nouns, verbs, articles, idiomatic prepositional phrases, and multiple adjectives.

Chapter Summary

1. Students for whom English is not their first language have already internalized the grammar for their native language and may draw on this knowledge to make learning English grammar easier.
2. Count nouns can be enumerated; they must use a determiner in the singular and often use one in the plural.
3. Noncount nouns are usually difficult or impossible to count and do not have a plural form—except when used as count nouns.
4. English uses three articles, *a, an, the*. *The* is used for specific persons, places, or things; *a* or *an* is used for general nouns.
5. Subjects usually precede verbs in English. Exceptions are questions and inverted sentences.
6. *To do* and *to have* are irregular verbs that can be either action or helper verbs. *To be* can be either a linking or a helper verb.
7. Modals are a kind of helper verb that signifies *request, doubt, capability, necessity*, or *advisability*.
8. Stative verbs show that a subject will remain in a certain state for some time; statives usually cannot be used in the progressive tense.
9. Phrasal verbs consist of a base verb and a preposition or adverb. Some are separable (*figure* the problem *out*), and others are not (*count on* Jorge).
10. Prepositions of place and time can be confusing and often must be memorized.
11. Idiomatic phrases can be confusing and often must be memorized.
12. Adjectives have a preferred order. When they are cumulative, they do not require commas; when they are coordinate, they do.

Building Paragraphs

4

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BRANNAN



Introducing the Paragraph

19

[*Finding your way through a writing assignment may sometimes feel like wandering through a maze. However, you can find your path if (like the man on the ladder) you seek out a useful perspective. Write a brief paragraph telling of a challenging project that you found confusing at first but succeeded in completing. How did you prepare yourself? How did you organize the project?*]



KEY TOPICS

- What is a paragraph?
- Writing a topic sentence
- Developing body paragraphs
- Writing a concluding sentence
- Organizing body paragraphs
- Choosing a title

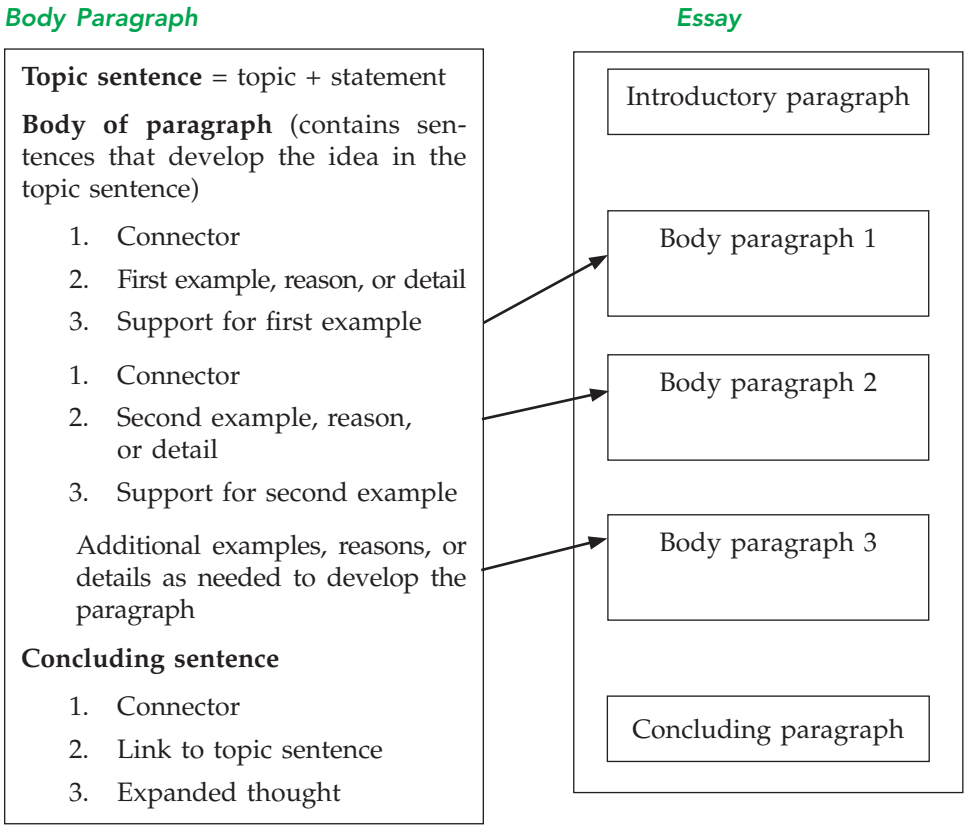
What Is a Paragraph?

Perhaps in the past when faced with a writing project, you have found yourself puzzled and anxious, like the man staring out of this maze. "What am I supposed to be doing? I don't know where to begin or where this thing's going to lead me." Well, all writing is a bit mysterious in that we find our way through a topic, learning more about what we want to say as we go. It is helpful to remember that all longer writing structures are built from sentences, the focus of Chapters 3–18 of this text. You already know how to craft a sentence—and you will continue to improve at doing so. In this chapter, you will focus on putting sentences together in a meaningful way to create a sound structure.

Knowing a structure's form makes the writing task less mysterious and gives us a head start into any topic—an aerial view of the maze. The **paragraph—**a collection of clearly related sentences that make a point—is one of these forms. There are four types of paragraphs:

- Introductory
- Body
- Concluding
- Transitional

Essays may use all of these "specialty" paragraphs, but our focus in this unit is the **body paragraph**, which you will see has some predictable parts and a form that can help you discover and arrange your ideas. Here you can see what a body paragraph looks like in relation to an essay:



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The body paragraph has three basic parts: **topic sentence, developmental sentences,** and **concluding sentence.** As you can see from this diagram, the essay also has an introduction and a conclusion, but they are entire paragraphs, not just single sentences. We will study essays in Unit Five.

Writing a Topic Sentence

To focus a paragraph, writers stay with a single idea, often expressed in a single sentence called a **topic sentence,** which is frequently the opening sentence of the paragraph. These guiding sentences name a topic and then make a statement about it. For example:

About.com is a terrific source of information.

The topic, About.com, is underlined once, and the statement twice. From this sentence we expect a paragraph that discusses some terrific information. The topic sentence *limits* the topic to something that can be discussed in a paragraph, and so it is a useful sentence.

However, how much direction would we get from a "topic" sentence like the following?

About.com hasn't always been around.

This sentence doesn't tell us clearly what the writer plans to say about About.com, so it fails to limit the topic and is therefore not very useful.

English Review Note

English paragraphs often start with a topic sentence. This may differ in other languages where it might be considered rude because it expresses a strong and direct point.

HOW TO WRITE A STRONG TOPIC SENTENCE

1. **Limit the topic, and make a clear statement about it.** Choose a small enough part of a larger topic that you can cover it fully in a paragraph.

   NOT THIS: Competitive sports in the United States have strong fan support.

   BUT THIS: Fans of the Chicago Cubs are some of the most loyal in baseball.

   The topic is Cubs' fans, and the limiting statement is their loyalty.

   You might further limit your topic with a **forecasting statement,** which names specifically what will be discussed:

   Fans of the Chicago Cubs are so loyal that they buy semi-truckfuls of Cubs memorabilia, follow the team on its road trips, and support the players win or lose.

2. **Use specific words.** One way to make a topic sentence more interesting is by adding specific words.

   LESS SPECIFIC: St. Elmo is alive with tourists in the summer.

   MORE SPECIFIC: St. Elmo, a *ghost town* in *central Colorado,* is alive with tourists in the summer.

ACTIVITY 19.1 *Topic Sentences: Finding the Parts*

For the following group of topic sentences, underline the topic once and the limiting statement twice.

EXAMPLE: The TV reality shows *Ice Road Truckers* and the *Deadliest Catch* have much in common.

1. Learning to surf in Hawaii was a painful experience for me.

2. One cool autumn morning, Brian Rodriguez found himself in an awful predicament.
3. Bend, Oregon, is one of my favorite places to vacation for several good reasons.
4. Finding your way around a big city is not hard if you have the right tools.
5. The rising cost of gas has affected people in several unpleasant ways.

Topic Sentences: Focusing

Effective topic sentences strike a balance between being too broad and too limited. The goal is to write a sentence just roomy enough for the detailed examples and explanations in the body of the paragraph to develop. Notice how the following broad topic sentence can be narrowed:

Unfocused: Biting insects bother people.

Focused: In the summer, mosquitoes make my backyard unbearable.

ACTIVITY 19.2 Topic Sentences: Focusing

Rewrite the following sentences to narrow their focus. In your revised sentences, underline the topic once and the limiting statement twice.

EXAMPLE:

Unfocused: Animals can be a nuisance.

Focused: *My dog, Bear, causes problems with his digging, barking, tearing up the trash.*

1. **Unfocused:** People's pets can take up much of their owners' time.

   Focused: _____

   _____

2. **Unfocused:** Vacations can be memorable experiences.

   Focused: _____

   _____

   _____

3. **Unfocused:** There are huge creatures living in the ocean.

   Focused: _____

   _____

   _____

4. **Unfocused:** Some politicians do seem to care about their country.

   Focused: _____

   _____

   _____

5. **Unfocused:** I like some holidays better than others.

   Focused: _____

   _____

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As a paragraph grows, a writer may drift from the focusing statement in his topic sentence. When this happens, the supporting sentences will often need to be revised. If the new direction seems to be more of what the writer wants, however, she may revise the topic sentence instead.

ACTIVITY 19.3 Topic Sentences: Seeing in Context

To help you focus topic sentences, first read the following groups of sentences from body paragraphs. Next, list the topic discussed in each group, and then write a suitable topic sentence, underlining the topic once and the limiting statement twice.

EXAMPLE: Not all U.S. sports fans are as devoted to their teams as the Kansas City fans are. Many people only cheer for the team that is winning. They buy the jersey because that team won the Super Bowl or the World Series, even though they didn't watch a regular game all season. However, KC fans wear their team's colors proudly no matter what the season's outcome because there is always next year.

Topic: *Loyalty of sports fans to their teams*

Possible topic sentence: *Kansas City fans are some of the most loyal in the country.*

1. The woman who nurses her child back to health when he has been bent over the toilet with a 102-degree fever and vomiting for two hours, this woman is a real mother. Mothers also try to keep their children safe within the home. A mother helps raise her child's spirits when the child is depressed. When her daughter wakes at 3:00 a.m. frightened from a nightmare, a real mother sits with her to make her feel secure and loved.

   Topic: _____

   Possible topic sentence: _____

   _____

2. When I'm on the baseball diamond, nothing else matters except the person in the batter's box and the catcher, calling pitches behind the plate. I love being a pitcher because I control the tempo of the game. I love firing a hard fastball by the opposing batter or catching him off guard with a sharp curveball. The greatest thrill for me in any game is striking someone out.

   Topic: _____

   Possible topic sentence: _____

   _____

Topic Sentences: Revising

To make a rough topic sentence more interesting, you can add specific words. "Specific" describes a word that belongs in a smaller group than another similar but more general word. For example, *animal* is a fairly general word that includes many creatures. To be more specific, you might choose the word *rhinoceros* or *giraffe*. General words are necessary and useful, but specific words create sharper images and can make your topic sentence more readable.

ACTIVITY 19.4 Topic Sentences: Revising with Specific Words

Rewrite the following rough topic sentences by adding more-specific words to make the sentences more interesting. Also, underline the topic once and the limiting statement twice.

EXAMPLE:

Rough topic sentence: I went to a really good party that didn't stay so good.

Revised topic sentence: The *Labor Day party* at Alfredo's *was great until the police knocked on the door.*

1. **Rough topic sentence:** A friend of mine won a prize recently.

   Revised topic sentence: _____

2. **Rough topic sentence:** I made a difficult decision after I graduated from high school.

   Revised topic sentence: _____

   _____

3. **Rough topic sentence:** My family life was disrupted when our pet died.

   Revised topic sentence: _____

   _____

4. **Rough topic sentence:** In some areas winter is rougher than others.

   Revised topic sentence: _____

   _____

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Developing Body Paragraphs

After you have written an effective topic sentence, it is time to work on **support sentences**. To develop those sentences, you will use examples, details, and explanations.

Examples

Examples are specific instances that clarify statements. For instance, if a friend says that fall is her favorite season, you might ask why. When she tells you that she likes the changing color of the leaves, the cooler weather, and the end of that obnoxious cicada shrieking, she has just given you three examples. You might offer personal examples based on your own experiences (as in the previous example about fall) or give examples outside of your immediate experience, as in those categories listed below:

TYPES OF EXAMPLES

1. **Facts**, or commonly accepted truths: Whales and dolphins are mammals.
2. **Statistics**, or numerical facts: A healthy human body temperature is 98.6 degrees.
3. **Information from print sources** (books, newspapers, magazines), **electronic sources** (Internet, TV, radio), and **interviews**
4. **Secondhand anecdotes**, or stories that have happened to people other than you
5. **Comparisons:** An agouti is like a giant guinea pig with long legs.
6. **"What-if" situations**, or speculations about what could happen: What might happen if car manufacturers took fuel economy seriously?
7. **Dialogue** reported or created to express a point

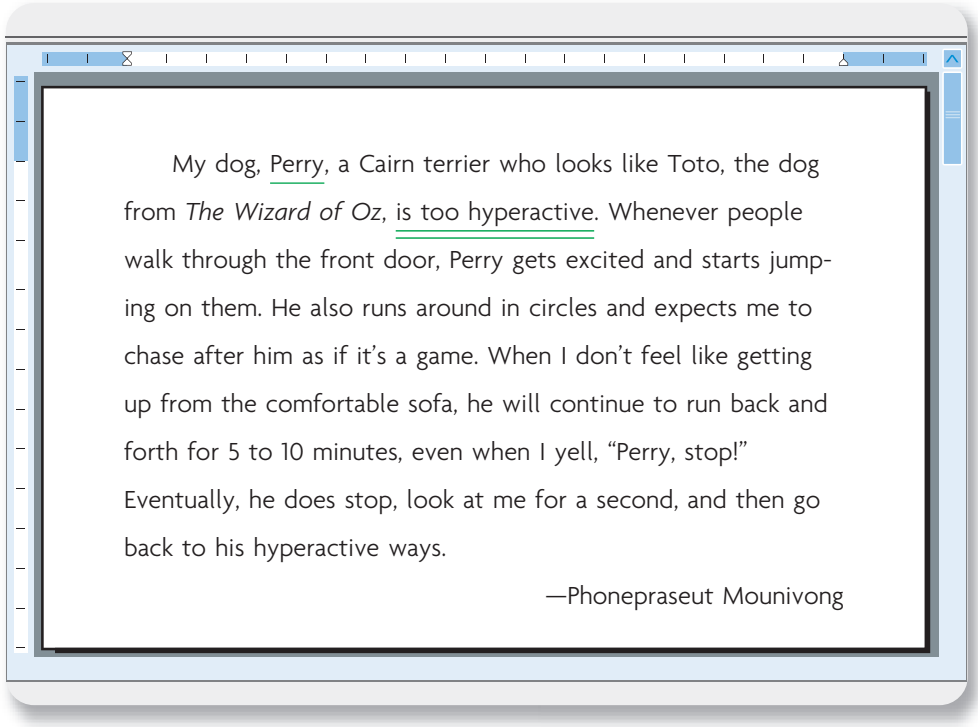
Details

Details are the specific words we use to clarify and add interest to examples. For instance, to make the fall changing of leaves more vivid, we could add the color words *scarlet* and *gold*. Further, we could attach those sight details to specific trees: scarlet *maples* and gold *aspens*. Mentioning other **sensory** details like the *cool* fall weather or the *shrieking* cicadas can help build memorable images.

Explanations

Explanations work with detailed examples to develop your paragraphs. Explaining puts examples into a context so that the reader understands them. For instance, a reader might better understand why the cool of fall weather is important to the writer if she explained that she no longer uses her air conditioning in the summer (to save energy and money) but instead relies on her attic fan to cool the house—and that it doesn't do such a great job when it's 100 degrees outside!

Notice how the following student paragraph (in which the topic is underlined once and the limiting statement twice) is developed with detailed examples and explanation:



My dog, Perry, a Cairn terrier who looks like Toto, the dog from *The Wizard of Oz*, is too hyperactive. Whenever people walk through the front door, Perry gets excited and starts jumping on them. He also runs around in circles and expects me to chase after him as if it's a game. When I don't feel like getting up from the comfortable sofa, he will continue to run back and forth for 5 to 10 minutes, even when I yell, "Perry, stop!" Eventually, he does stop, look at me for a second, and then go back to his hyperactive ways.

—Phonepraseut Mounivong

When the writer tells us his dog is "too hyperactive," we ask, "What do you mean by that? Can you give us some detailed examples?" Phonepraseut does by telling about Perry's habits of jumping on people, running in circles, and running back and forth. Within the more detailed examples, we see specific words like *circles, sofa,* and *5 to 10 minutes*; the breed, *Cairn terrier*; and the clear comparison to Toto, from *The Wizard of Oz*. The writer also explains why Perry's hyperactive behavior irritates him when he "doesn't feel like getting up from the comfortable sofa."

Combining detailed examples with explanations and becoming increasingly specific with those examples help a reader understand a writer's points.

English Review Note

In some languages, paragraph development repeats the main idea or adds digressions instead of including supporting details.

ACTIVITY 19.5 *Developing Body Paragraphs*



For help with this activity, review the preceding material under "Developing Body Paragraphs."

The groups of sentences below begin with a topic sentence (topic underlined once, limiting statement twice) and are followed by a main example to develop the topic. To make the example in each group more clear and interesting, add further details, examples, and explanations.

EXAMPLE:

Topic sentence: There are some rules that I hate to follow.

Example: One rule I can't stand is the law that keeps me stopped at a long red light when there is no traffic anywhere.

Details, examples, explanation: *There I am in the middle of nowhere, a country T intersection at 3:00 a.m., with no traffic for miles around. The light has been red for 2 minutes, and I feel like a fool just staying here burning gas. I look east down one deserted stretch of road and then west. Nope, nobody there . . . not even a police officer. I think to myself, "Why don't I just go?"*

1. **Topic sentence:** My brother and I were very competitive as boys.

   Example: When we played baseball, the competition really heated up.

   Details, examples, explanation: _____

2. **Topic sentence:** Learning to ride a bicycle, I had some spectacular crashes.

   Example: I remember my first painful accident happened in the alley alongside my backyard.

   Details, examples, explanation: _____

3. **Topic sentence:** If I could time travel, there are three moments in my life I would love to visit.

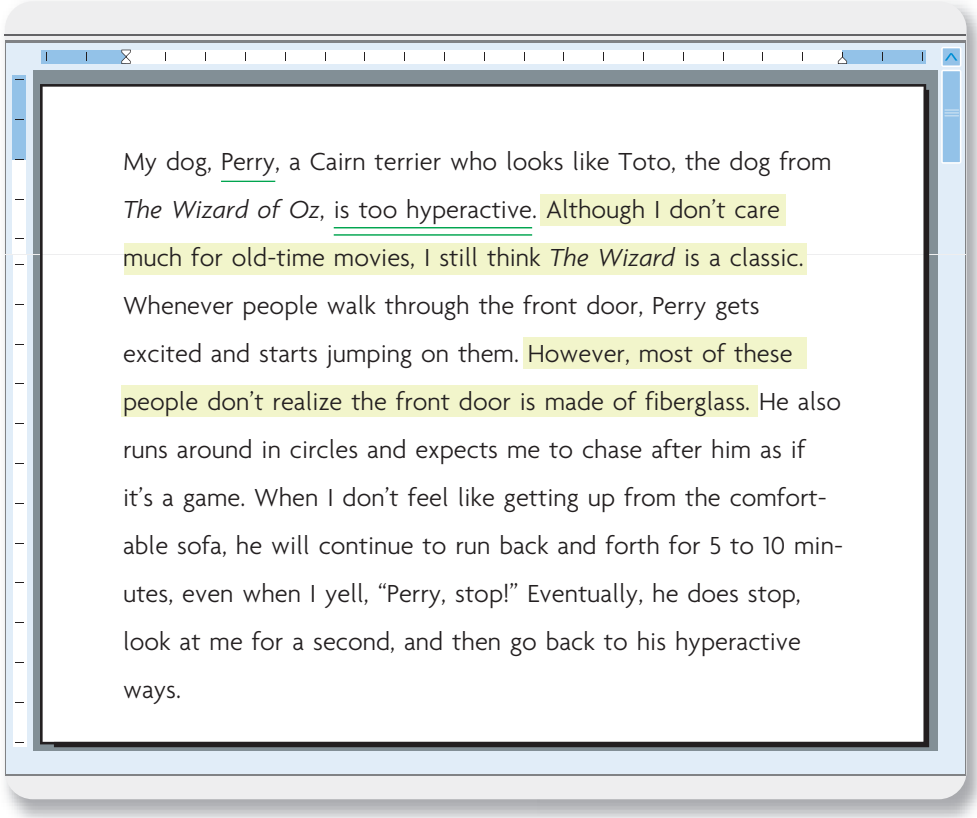
   Example: The first place I would travel back to is Ithaca, New York, where my brother and I played in the wooded hills all day long.

   Details, examples, explanation: _____

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Unity in Paragraphs: Ideas Working Together

Paragraphs that have a strong topic sentence and are well developed may still have problems with **unity**, that is, with all ideas and details adding to the topic sentence (or main point). Information or explanation that drifts from the main point should be cut, even if it is interesting. Consider the earlier example of the hyperactive dog, Perry. How unified would these two points (highlighted below) be if we added them to the example?



My dog, Perry, a Cairn terrier who looks like Toto, the dog from *The Wizard of Oz*, is too hyperactive. Although I don't care much for old-time movies, I still think *The Wizard* is a classic. Whenever people walk through the front door, Perry gets excited and starts jumping on them. However, most of these people don't realize the front door is made of fiberglass. He also runs around in circles and expects me to chase after him as if it's a game. When I don't feel like getting up from the comfortable sofa, he will continue to run back and forth for 5 to 10 minutes, even when I yell, "Perry, stop!" Eventually, he does stop, look at me for a second, and then go back to his hyperactive ways.



Be on the lookout for unity as you revise your work. See Chapter 20 for more on revising paragraphs.

These statements detract from the paragrah's unity. Rough drafts often contain information that drifts a bit or a lot from the main point, in part because drafting is a process of exploration. But our job as writers (particularly when we revise) is to catch this loosely related material and cut it.

ACTIVITY 19.6 *Unity in Paragraphs*

Read the following paragraph, which extends the topic of Perry, the problem dog, and underline any sentences that seem to drift from the main point. Next, tell why the ideas don't belong.

Besides being hyperactive, Perry damages everything in sight. The carpet in the living room has three big holes from his trying to bury his bones. The bones aren't all that big, and I should probably give them to him outside, but still he ought to learn. He also chews on the corners of the walls and on all the furniture. I used to live in a well-maintained, clean apartment. Too bad I can't say that anymore. His favorite chew toy is anything made of fabric, for example, my socks. However, most of them are old, so I don't have that much to lose.



In the topic sentence, the topic is underlined once and the limiting statement twice.

In one month he has chewed through a dozen pairs! And then there are my tennis shoes; he's chewed off all the laces. If I could play in Crocs, I guess I wouldn't care. Even when I shout at him, "Perry, bad dog!" he just gives me an innocent look and continues his destruction.

Why don't these sentences belong? _____

_____

Clarity in Paragraphs: Defining Terms

Another point to watch for in your writing is **clarity,** or ensuring that your reader understands your words and ideas. In the preceding paragraphs about Perry, the writer uses terms like *Cairn terrier* and *Crocs*, expecting his audience to know what he is talking about. To help them understand what a Cairn terrier looks like, the writer referenced the dog Toto and the Oz movie, expecting his audience to be familiar with both. If Phonepraseut has misjudged what his audience knows about dogs or movies, he will leave them puzzled.

When you write, you are trying to connect with your audience, so it is best to define any terms that might be unfamiliar to your readers and to explain ideas that they might not understand.



Avoid using translations, which are confusing to the audience.

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ACTIVITY 19.7 *Clarity in Paragraphs*

In this paragraph, underline any word or phrase you think the stated audience might not be familiar with. Use the example as a model.

EXAMPLE:

Audience: First-year college students

In a study by the Wyoming Academy of Science, video games have been shown to improve people's coordination. After playing *Beatmania* for 20 minutes, players' motor skills showed improvement. Also, the APA conducted a study of 86 men who improved their skill acquisition after learning a difficult video game. Finally, experiments have proved that playing games like *Tetris* improves children's mental rotation. As you can see, these studies support the positive psychological effects of some video games.

- **Audience:** Middle-aged adults who are only semi–computer literate and don't know much about online buying but who want to learn how to purchase music from the Internet.

The most popular source for music downloads is the iTunes store. This online retailer offers millions of songs and albums, complete with album art and sometimes bonus tracks. It also sells videos, such as episodes of popular programs, so that you can see last night's *The Daily Show* or *Gossip Girl* right after downloading a "Clap Your Hands Say Yeah" song. iTunes software used to be for Mac people only, but now PC users can get access, too. All that is required to start buying music is iTunes software, which is now dual platform. When you visit the iTunes store, you'll be able to search by artist, album, or type of music. Once you've found what you're looking for, you can listen to a sample for free. Usually, you can buy a single MP3 for $1 or an album for about $10. iTunes does limit the number of times you can transfer music files to other mediums (such as MP3 players and CDs), so you can't make limitless copies or mixes for your friends. But ultimately, buying music online is a great deal; you'll save on money, time, and space.



You can learn more about definition in Chapter 28.

Writing a Concluding Sentence

When you have finished the body of your paragraph, instead of just trailing off or saying, "Well, I'm done now," why not end decisively? A strong concluding sentence reminds the reader again of the topic and limiting statement and makes some final point. A well-crafted concluding sentence gives your audience one last reason to have confidence in what they have just read. Here are three points to help you write a concluding sentence:

HINT

For a list of connectors, see pp. 288–289.

HOW TO WRITE A CONCLUDING SENTENCE

1. **Use a connector:** Transitional words like *finally, however, despite, on the other hand,* and other connectors ease your reader into your final point.
2. **Link to the topic sentence:** Mention your topic and limiting statement again, or use synonyms for them.
3. **Expand the thought:** Make a final point about your topic, using any of the following methods:
   a. Express an emotion.
   b. Give a judgment or opinion.
   c. Ask a related question.
   d. Make a reflective statement.
   e. Tell how your topic has affected your behavior or outlook on life.

Here are four things *not* to do in writing a concluding sentence:

1. Don't just repeat a slightly different version of your topic sentence. Instead, make a point.
2. Don't fail to clearly link this final point to your topic.
3. Make sure the final point is interesting; avoid using worn-out phrases or clichés.
4. Don't say, "I'm ending the paper now." Your final point should make it clear that the paper is complete (the white space following your last sentence will also be a clue).

English Review Note

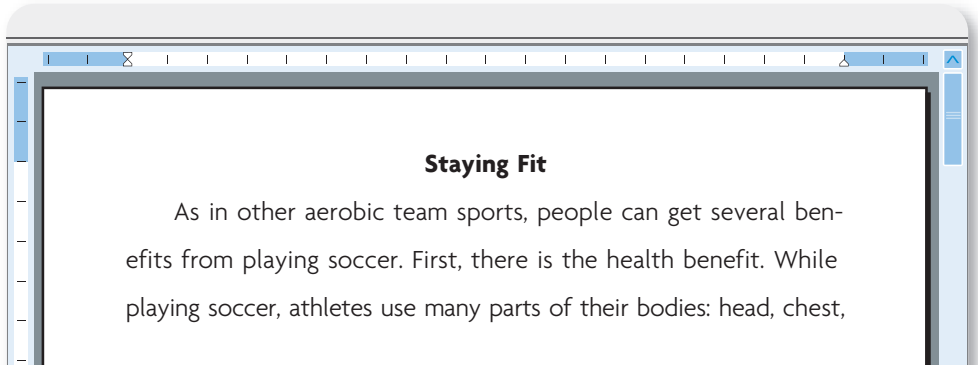
In English, final thoughts may express strong emotional conclusions. This may be unfamiliar in some native languages.

Strong Conclusions: Learning from a Student Sample

For help understanding the methods just listed for writing an expanded or final thought, read the paragraph that follows, and then read the five sentences that *might* have been used as a conclusion.

HINT

Note how this paragraph uses examples effectively.



Staying Fit

As in other aerobic team sports, people can get several benefits from playing soccer. First, there is the health benefit. While playing soccer, athletes use many parts of their bodies: head, chest,

thighs, and feet, parts that they don't always use in everyday life. Soccer builds muscle mass, especially in the lower body. Also, since the games last 90 minutes, with players in almost constant motion, participants become aerobically fit. Next, soccer helps to improve a person's attitude on life. Practice and game days help with discipline and focus. Athletes must learn plays and be able to perform them well. They must listen closely to their coach and blend their moves with teammates' to complete a play. When playing against another team, athletes must be able to think quickly and adjust to the skill level and moves of the opposing team. In addition, after the game, win or lose, if they have played hard and well, the players feel an enormous sense of achievement and excitement, and they become more self-confident. However, the most important benefit from soccer is social, meeting people and forming lasting friendships. Soccer is a team sport, so teammates run plays together. They share the same emotions: happiness when winning, disappointment when losing. Players often keep in touch with each other off the field, too, so that the team becomes like an extended family. Playing soccer makes friendships strong.

—Hyuk Sun

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Now see five possible concluding sentences below.

Possible Concluding Sentences

1. **Emotion:** I have played soccer for many years, and it has so many positives that I would not feel whole without it.
2. **Opinion:** Because soccer has so many benefits, it should be part of every young person's life.
3. **Question:** If you feel bored, out of shape, or lonely, why not find a soccer team of your own on which to play?
4. **Reflective statement:** People sometimes talk about life as a game to be played; if that is so, then perhaps another

benefit of soccer is that it mirrors life, a game to be played—and won.

5. **Behavior change:** The benefits of soccer are clear to me, and without it I would find the couch hard to resist on a Sunday afternoon.

There is no one "right" concluding sentence for a paragraph, only better and worse options. When you write your own last sentence, you will usually have to work with it a bit to find a final point and wording that feels best for your topic, purpose, and audience.

ACTIVITY 19.8 *Choosing Concluding Sentences*

In each set of sentences below, circle the letter of the concluding sentence that best links to the given topic sentence and makes the strongest final point.

1. **Topic sentence:** Teenage girls have many problems when they become mothers.

Possible concluding sentences:

a. Let's not forget about the problems of the teen boys who try to become good fathers.

b. It is true that some teenage girls are wonderful mothers.

c. For all these reasons, I think that teenage girls should wait until they are older to become parents.

2. **Topic sentence:** Choosing to drink and drive was the biggest mistake my friend Austin ever made.

Possible concluding sentences:

a. And the funny thing is, many of my friends still drink and drive and get away with it.

b. Although not everyone who drives while intoxicated suffers this awful fate, drinking and driving is always the wrong choice.

c. I don't like the taste of beer, so I don't have to worry about my own DUIs.

3. **Topic sentence:** The differences between my new and old neighborhoods in Kiev are the buildings, people, and cultural advantages.

Possible concluding sentences:

a. Although I see advantages to my new neighborhood, I feel most at peace in old Kiev, as the culture there from my past fills my soul.

b. However, the loveliest place is Andrew Street, which is small and closed off from automobile traffic.

c. The buildings, people, and entertainment are different in the suburbs than in downtown Kiev.

Organizing Body Paragraphs

Topic and concluding sentences are important to focusing your paragraph and ending it well. But arranging the supporting sentences demands equal consideration.

Methods of Organization

If you are writing a **description** (setting out details about a person, place, animal, or something else), you would most likely choose a **spatial order**, that is, giving details from top to bottom, side to side, back to front, and so forth. You will practice this method of arrangement in Chapter 21.

Another organization method, used for narrative (story telling) and process description (telling how things work), is called **chronological order,** or arranging events as they happen in time. We will work with chronological order in Chapters 22 and 25.

The last, and perhaps most useful, method for most of your college writing is called **order of importance**, arranging examples and ideas from least important or dramatic to most. This method is discussed in depth in Chapter 23, which focuses on illustrating effectively with examples.

When writing essays, you may find yourself mixing these organizational methods, detailing a place within a paragraph using spatial order, narrating a story in another paragraph using time order, and arranging examples within another paragraph by importance.



Chapter 21 focuses on writing descriptions; Chapter 22 focuses on writing personal narratives; Chapter 25 focuses on writing about processes.

ORGANIZE PARAGRAPHS ON-SCREEN

Reorganizing body paragraphs is much easier to do in a word-processing program (which allows you to cut and paste easily) than it is on paper (which requires you to scratch out or erase words and rewrite text by hand). Save paper and unnecessary headaches—and avoid squinting at your own handwriting—by writing and revising paragraphs on the computer. ●



Coherence in Paragraphs: Connecting Sentences

As we have discussed in this chapter, paragraphs are **unified** when all details, examples, and explanations help support a single idea (topic sentence). However, sentences within paragraphs must also be well connected or **coherent**, meaning that they should flow smoothly one into the next to move the reader along easily. Here are several common methods for doing this, most of which we use without much thought.



Organizational methods can be mixed and matched to fit the writing situation.

Methods for Creating Coherence

1. Transitions
2. Repetition
3. Synonyms
4. Pronouns



Transitions are also called **connectors** in this book. The table on the next page lists and groups common transitions by use.

Using Transitions

Transitions are the most common way of linking sentences. Transitions can be single words or phrases and are used to show location, passage through time, addition of material, giving of examples, and so forth.

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COMMON TRANSITIONS BY USE



Take the time to review this chart. When writing in English, being familiar with common transitions is valuable.

TRANSITIONS FOR LOCATING OR MOVING IN SPACE
(Particularly useful for descriptive writing)

above	east (west . . .)	in the back	over
against	elsewhere	in the distance	surrounded by
alongside	far off (away)	into	there
around	farther on	near	through
at the side (end)	forward	next to	to
backward	from	off	to the right (left)
behind	here (close to here)	on	under
below	in	on the other side	up
beyond	in between	onto	upstairs
by	in front of	opposite	
down	inside	out of	

TRANSITIONS FOR MOVING IN TIME
(Particularly useful in narrative writing)

after	first (second, etc.)	next	suddenly
afterward	immediately	now	then
at last	in the meantime	often	time passed
awhile	in the past	once	until
before	later	previously	when
earlier	long ago	recently	while
finally	meanwhile	soon	

- **All references to calendar time and calendar events:**

  ago (days, weeks, months, years)

  one day (days of the week, months of the year, seasons, holidays)

  that morning (afternoon, evening)

  today (tonight, yesterday, tomorrow)

- **All references to clock time:** clock numbers used with a.m./p.m. (12:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.); a few minutes (seconds, hours)

- **All references to regular meals:** during breakfast (brunch, lunch, dinner)

TRANSITIONS FOR ADDING MATERIAL
(Particularly useful in writing that explains how something works)

again	as well as	furthermore	likewise
also	besides	in addition	moreover
and	further	last	next

TRANSITIONS FOR USING EXAMPLES AND EMPHASIS (Particularly useful in explanatory and persuasive writing)			
above all	especially	in particular	one reason
after all	for example	in truth	specifically
another	for instance	it is true	surely
as an example	indeed	most important	that is
certainly	in fact	of course	to illustrate

TRANSITIONS FOR COMPARING (Particularly useful in writing that focuses on similarties and differences			
alike	both	like	resembling
also	in the same way	likewise	similarly

TRANSITIONS FOR CONTRASTING (Particularly useful in writing that focuses on similarities and differences)			
after all	dissimilar	nevertheless	though
although	even though	on the contrary	unlike
but	however	on the other hand	whereas
difference	in contrast	otherwise	yet
differs from	in spite of	still	

TRANSITIONS FOR SHOWING CAUSE AND EFFECT (Particularly useful in explanatory and persuasive writing)			
accordingly	because	hence	then
and so	consequently	since	therefore
as a result	for this reason	so	thus

TRANSITIONS FOR SUMMARIZING AND CONCLUDING (Particularly useful at the end of body paragraphs and at the beginning of concluding paragraphs)			
finally	in conclusion	in short	that is
in brief	in other words	largely	to summarize

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ACTIVITY 19.9 *Coherence through Transitions*

Using the preceding transitions table, locate and underline all the transitional words in the following paragraph. The first sentence is marked as an example.

Another reason for the popularity of the arowana is that it resembles the mystical Asian dragon. For instance, the colorful, reflective scales are similar. Also, the arowana has whiskers not unlike the dragon's mustache. Besides the scales and whiskers, they both have slender bodies and move in much the same way. In Asian culture the dragon represents good luck, strength, and power. Especially in southern China, many people believe that a dragon can ward off evil. In addition, many businesspeople keep arowanas to maintain a prosperous business.

Using Repetition

Repeating a word or phrase is another common method of linking sentences securely. However, be careful not to repeat a word excessively, or the word will become tedious.

HINT

Chapter 33 discusses deliberate repetition for emphasis.

Not this: My good friend **Niki** worked hard, and **Niki** cared for **Niki's** family. **Niki** completed her GED in two years at a local high school, and then **Niki** went to UMKC for her undergraduate and graduate degrees.

But this: My good friend **Niki** worked hard and cared for her family. She completed her GED in two years at a local high school, and then **Niki** went to UMKC for her undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Using Synonyms

Similar words or phrases, which we call **synonyms,** are used frequently to link sentences and avoid tedious repetition.



ACTIVITY 19.10 WORKING TOGETHER: *Coherence through Repetition and Synonyms*

Working with a partner, cross out unneeded repetition in the paragraph that follows; then write in replacement words above the line. However, do not replace every repeated word because artful repetition can be useful. With your partner, come up with an explanation of why at least one example of repetition used here works and why at least one example does not.

Education can change people's lives in positive ways. One example of education changing a life is a man named Kaka, who I knew in Kashmir. In his forties he used to do odd jobs in our neighborhood. After long days of unchanging hard work, he would often say, "I realize now that education is the key to success." Continuing his hard work, he managed to change his life by educating himself, changing where he lived when he moved to India to go to college, and then graduating in 3 years with honors. Not only did his earnings change; but also he was able to bring change to the community, which he did by establishing a high school in his old neighborhood, a positive change that remains today even after Kaka's death.

Using Pronouns

HINT

Turn to Chapter 7 for more on pronouns and pronouns reference.

Pronouns—words like *I, he, she, they, us, those, each, some, their*—by their nature stand in the place of nouns (and other pronouns) and so can help with coherence. For instance, notice how the noun *Niki* was replaced by the pronouns *she* and *her* in the example under repetition. However, pronouns can be misleading, attaching themselves grammatically to the nearest available noun (or pronoun), so use them with care. Notice the confusing pronoun reference in the following example:

Tyler and Ethan went to the Slipknot concert, and *they* were friendly to *everyone* at the concert, talking to the fans even when *they* went up on stage to play some head-banging metal.

The question is who was being friendly, and who played the music? It was probably Slipknot, but the reference is unclear.

ACTIVITY 19.11 *Coherence through Pronouns*

In the following paragraph, cross out unneeded or confusing pronouns, and write in the replacement words above the line.

A Paid Vacation

Playing in the snow is always fun for kids, but it's done a little differently in Brooklyn, especially when there is no school. First, we would put on our snow clothes and then grab a shovel, planning on making a killing shoveling all of it. After maybe shoveling one of them, though, my pals and I would get bored and soon start pelting each other and innocent bystanders with them. My buddy Mike and I would often have to run for our lives after breaking a car window with it. Other kids would "skitch" their way to safety, holding on to it on the back of a car and sliding along the snow-covered street at 30 miles an hour. By late in the afternoon smoke-filled pizzerias would be packed with soaking wet ones from the neighborhood. Some of the kids would spend the day's wages on video games, pizza, rice balls, sausage rolls, and heroes. We would happily brag about it and our paid holiday for the youth of Brooklyn.



Be careful not to confuse *he* and *she*.

Choosing a Title

The finishing touch to your paragraph is the title. If you consider that these few words are the first your audience will see and can arouse their curiosity (or not), then it might seem worth some trouble to create an interesting title. Sometimes a title will come to you quickly; other times it will take work to tease out a good one.

Of course, a title should reflect the topic, but it can do more than that. For example, let's look back to the Strong Conclusions section of this chapter at the title of the paragraph "Staying Fit." This is a workable and logical title for the soccer paragraph, but could it be more engaging? If we link it with the fourth concluding sentence, we might come up with "Winning the Game of Life," or we could play off the fifth concluding sentence and end up with "Keeping Me off the Couch." Linking a title to a paragraph's main idea or final point is one way to produce an effective title.

Below you can see several other suggestions for creating effective, engaging titles:

1. Keep titles short (say one to eight words).
2. Link the title to your main idea or final point.
3. Create an image: use a metaphor, make a literal comparison, use specific details and action words.
4. Try a question.
5. Make a play on words—called a pun.
6. Refer to something your audience might know about and be interested in: sports, news, literature, religion, social groups, life roles, jokes, song lyrics, and more.

Knowing what *not* to do when creating a title is also important. Avoid:

1. **clichés and worn-out phrases.** Don't use phrases like "Caught between a Rock and a Hard Place" or "Butterflies Really *Were* Fluttering in My Stomach!"

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2. **inappropriate tone.** Your title should reflect the feeling you want your readers to have as they read your work (happy, sad, angry, serious, humorous, etc.).

FORMATTING A TITLE CORRECTLY

1. Capitalize all words in your title—even small ones like *do*, *is*, and *can*—except articles (*a*, *an*, *the*), prepositions (*in*, *on*, *to*, *of*, *between*, etc.), and coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*, *or*, *so*, *yet*, *nor*, *for*). However, the first and last words of the title and any word following a colon (:) should be capitalized.
2. On a title page or when the title is above the opening sentence of a paper, do not enclose it in quotation marks or underline it.
3. Center the title on the page.



See Chapter 21 for more on spatial arrangement.





ACTIVITY 19.12 **WORKING ONLINE: *Using Spatial Arrangement***

Try using spatial arrangement to reorder a paragraph's sentences (and check your work) at http://grammar.about.com/od/developingparagraphs/a/organizedesc.htm.

ACTIVITY 19.13 **WORKING ONLINE: *Paragraph Writing Review***

Take the Chapter 19 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. A paragraph is a unified, coherent collection of sentences that is usually grouped with other paragraphs.
2. Body paragraphs must have a central point, which is often expressed in a topic sentence that is placed first in the paragraph.
3. A topic sentence consists of the topic plus a limiting statement; it should be as interesting as possible.
4. Paragraphs are developed with examples, details, and explanations.
5. Paragraph support should be sufficient, relevant, and clear.
6. Paragraphs benefit from specific word choices and specific examples.
7. Concluding sentences should end a paper decisively. One way to do this is with an expanded thought.
8. Three types of organizational patterns for paragraphs are spatial, chronological, and order of importance. These methods often overlap.
9. A paragraph is unified when all examples, details, and explanations relate to a central point, which is often expressed in a topic sentence.
10. Paragraphs are coherent when sentences are clearly linked using transitions, repetition, synonyms, and pronouns.
11. A title's main purpose is to capture a reader's attention. Effective titles are brief, linked to the main idea, and engaging.

Revising Paragraphs 20

[*These men are stripping the floors of this house and will replace them with new material. Write a paragraph describing a time when you "revised" something: a living space of any size, a car, a pair of pants, a recipe for chili. What did you change and why? What were the benefits?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Revising first drafts
- Revising second drafts
- Revising final drafts
- Proofreading

Revising—or re-visioning—a work is one of the hardest yet most necessary parts of the creative act. Whether the task is to paint a wall, design a car, build a bridge, schedule employees, or write a paragraph, it is rarely done the best way the first time or finished in one attempt.

That first collection of ideas—your first draft—provides a foundation, a good starting point. If you believe that you can make your writing stronger, you are more likely to succeed at doing so. However, revision is seldom easy: it requires time, energy, patience, flexibility, and the willingness to learn as you go.

As you begin revising your draft, review Chapter 1, especially the sections on how to create a productive workspace, break out of writer's block, and work in groups.



Use your revising time more efficiently with this list.

A REVISION PRIORITY LIST

1. **Content:** detailed examples, explanations, comparisons
2. **Organization:** topic, subtopic, and concluding sentences; arrangement of examples, details, and story elements; and connectors
3. **Style:** word choice and arrangement of words into sentences
4. **Mechanics:** grammar, spelling, and punctuation

The rest of this chapter will give you many specific suggestions for moving through your drafts. You will also see how another student took her own paragraph through the process—from a first draft that was just OK to a final draft that is excellent.



A first draft is not a final draft, and vice versa.

Revising First Drafts

First drafts are not final drafts; they are often messy, overwritten, or incomplete. This is normal and not a cause for despair. Rough drafts give writers an opportunity to move ahead with ideas and see how to present them more effectively.

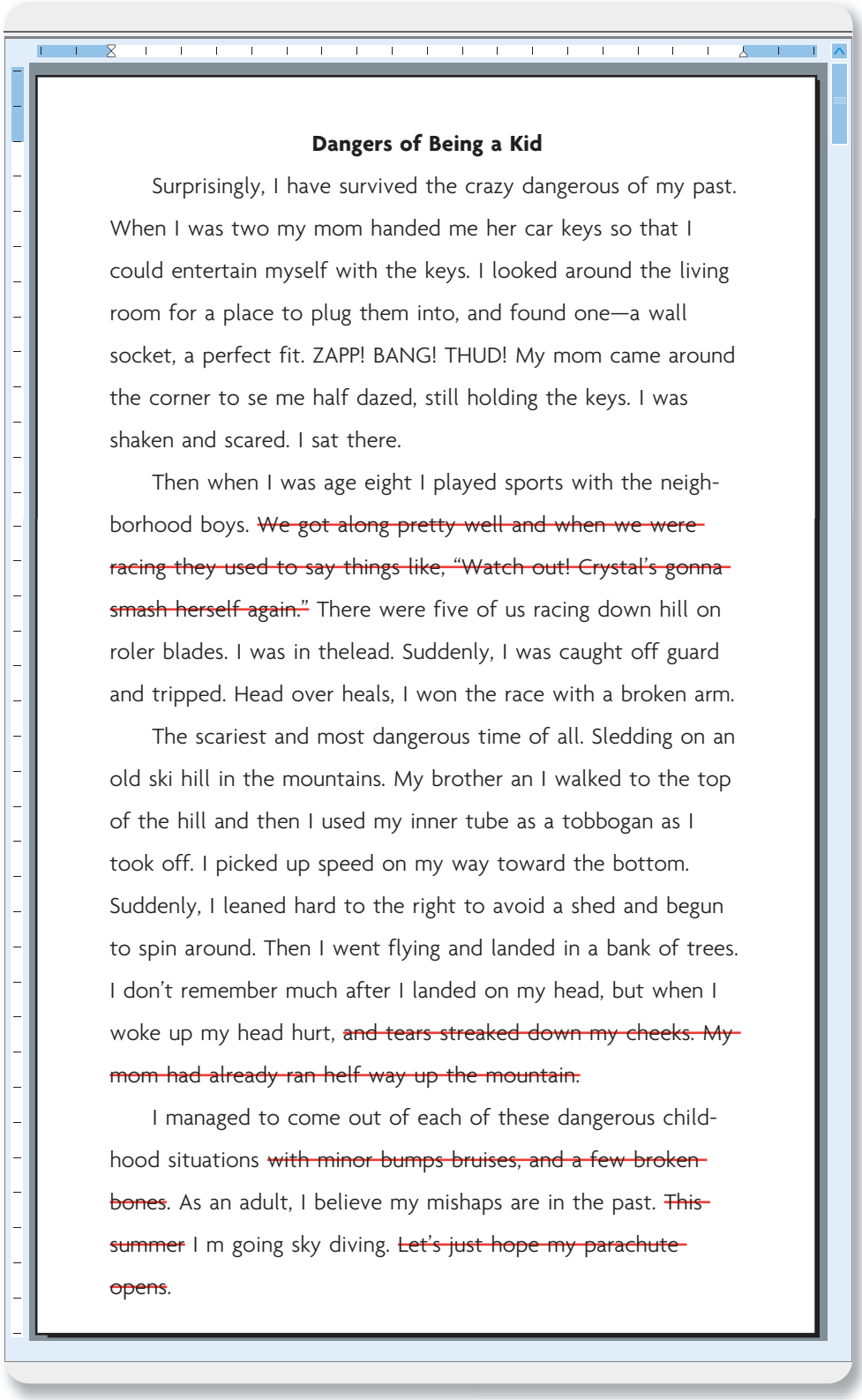


Your instructor can help point out your most common errors. In addition, have a peer, such as someone in your campus writing center, review your work.

REVISING FIRST DRAFTS: GENERAL CONCERNS

- **Focus:** Is the topic clear and limited?
- **Organization:** Does the paragraph contain topic, subtopic, and concluding sentences—and are they used effectively?
- **Material:** Are there enough supporting examples, details, and explanations—or are there too many?

The following is the first draft of an illustration paragraph by student Crystal Lockner focusing on dangerous childhood activities. *Note: This paragraph is separated into topic and concluding sentences and three main examples only to help illustrate its parts. The final draft should be a single paragraph.*



Dangers of Being a Kid

Surprisingly, I have survived the crazy dangerous of my past. When I was two my mom handed me her car keys so that I could entertain myself with the keys. I looked around the living room for a place to plug them into, and found one—a wall socket, a perfect fit. ZAPP! BANG! THUD! My mom came around the corner to se me half dazed, still holding the keys. I was shaken and scared. I sat there.

Then when I was age eight I played sports with the neighborhood boys. ~~We got along pretty well and when we were racing they used to say things like, "Watch out! Crystal's gonna smash herself again."~~ There were five of us racing down hill on roler blades. I was in thelead. Suddenly, I was caught off guard and tripped. Head over heals, I won the race with a broken arm.

The scariest and most dangerous time of all. Sledding on an old ski hill in the mountains. My brother an I walked to the top of the hill and then I used my inner tube as a tobbogan as I took off. I picked up speed on my way toward the bottom. Suddenly, I leaned hard to the right to avoid a shed and begun to spin around. Then I went flying and landed in a bank of trees. I don't remember much after I landed on my head, but when I woke up my head hurt, ~~and tears streaked down my cheeks. My mom had already ran helf way up the mountain.~~

I managed to come out of each of these dangerous childhood situations ~~with minor bumps bruises, and a few broken bones~~. As an adult, I believe my mishaps are in the past. ~~This summer~~ I m going sky diving. ~~Let's just hope my parachute opens~~.

FIRST DRAFT

Notice the unneeded ideas and words that Crystal cuts from this draft.

The writer needs subtopic sentences for examples 1 and 2.

In the next draft, Crystal will add more details to this example to make it more exciting.

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For more on topic sentences, see pp. 276–279.

First-Draft Revision Points

When you begin to look critically at your own first draft, take a few minutes to review the following revision points.

1. **How effective is your topic sentence?** Your topic sentence gives you and your reader direction, so mention the topic and limit it with a statement. In a descriptive paragraph, tell the dominant impression; in a narrative, try hinting at the climax or the meaning of the story. To be particularly specific, you can use a **forecasting statement** like this: My favorite comfort foods are barbecue potato chips, Edy's French Silk ice cream, and glazed donuts.
2. **Does your overall method of organization work?** Descriptions are usually best organized spatially, while narratives are arranged chronologically. Informational and persuasive writing often benefits from moving in order of importance.



For more on organizing by space, time, or importance, see pp. 312–314, 327, 332, and 339–341.

3. **Does a subtopic sentence introduce each main example? Subtopic sentences** are merely more specific and limited topic sentences. Neither descriptions nor narratives depend on these sentences to keep readers oriented. However, writing that works with examples and reasons usually benefits from subtopic sentences.
4. **How well developed is your paragraph?** Descriptions require precise details, specific words, and sensory details to help readers "see" the person, place, or object. Narratives must have clearly described action sequences with scene and character details. Most writing benefits from specific, detailed examples, action words, and comparisons.
5. **Are you explaining clearly?** Detailing an example is important, but it's even more important to help your readers understand why you gave it. Be certain to explain terms carefully and show how the example is linked to those before and after it. Act as a guide to your audience, and you won't lose them.



For more on subtopic sentences, see pp. 338–340.

6. **Are your examples relevant?** Although brainstorming many possible illustrations is a great idea, not all will be equally useful in your paper. Each example should add something significant to the others and the overall topic.
7. **How well connected are your sentences?** All types of writing profit from clearly linked sentences. Descriptions use transitions of place (*near, by, against*, etc.) and time (*when, after, next*, etc.), while narratives often employ transitions of time. Writing with examples or reasons may include a variety of transition types. Other connectors are repeat words, synonyms, and pronouns.
8. **How effective is your concluding sentence?** The concluding sentence offers the last few words your reader takes away. To seize this moment, carefully craft a conclusion that links to the topic sentence and makes a final point.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 20.1

To help you focus on the revision process and to alert your instructor to your progress, list three *specific* changes you have made or feel you ought to make in your first draft. Refer to the First-Draft Revision Points, and answer specifically. (Example: Item 4: I realized that my development was thin,

so I added these details _____

and this explanation _____.

Next, in a sentence or two say what you like best about your draft.

FEEDBACK *Trade first drafts with a partner. Note what you think is the strongest part of his or her draft. Then ask one question about it.*

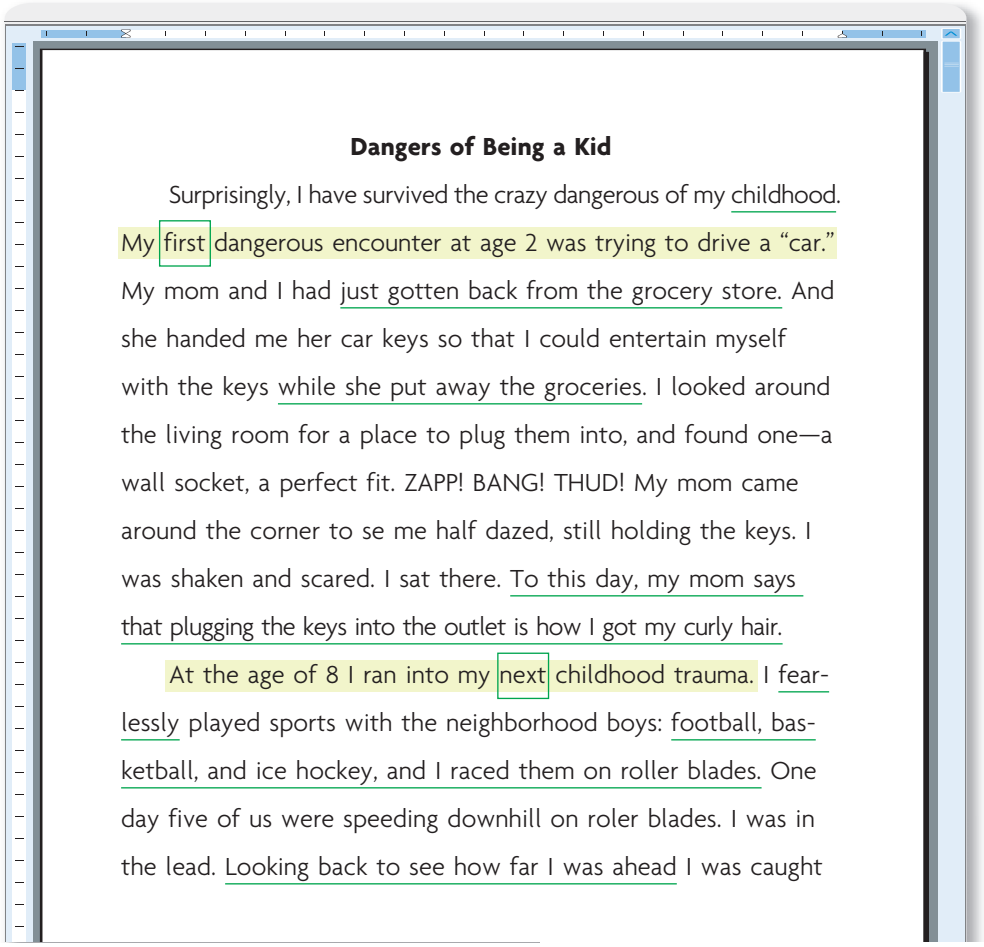


Revising Second Drafts

When you rework your draft, you can save time and avoid some frustration by prioritizing. If you are sure that your topic is well focused, your overall organization makes sense, and your main examples belong, then you can shift your attention to other concerns.

Here is the second draft of Crystal's paragraph. Note these general concerns for re-visioning this and your own second draft:

- Subtopic sentences (not needed in brief description and narrative)
- Detailed examples
- Complete explanations
- Connectors



Dangers of Being a Kid

Surprisingly, I have survived the crazy dangerous of my childhood. My first dangerous encounter at age 2 was trying to drive a "car." My mom and I had just gotten back from the grocery store. And she handed me her car keys so that I could entertain myself with the keys while she put away the groceries. I looked around the living room for a place to plug them into, and found one—a wall socket, a perfect fit. ZAPP! BANG! THUD! My mom came around the corner to se me half dazed, still holding the keys. I was shaken and scared. I sat there. To this day, my mom says that plugging the keys into the outlet is how I got my curly hair.

At the age of 8 I ran into my next childhood trauma. I fearlessly played sports with the neighborhood boys: football, basketball, and ice hockey, and I raced them on roller blades. One day five of us were speeding downhill on roler blades. I was in the lead. Looking back to see how far I was ahead I was caught

SECOND DRAFT



At the start of your writing project, create enough examples and other material so that you can choose the best. It is hard to let go of material if you don't start out with enough.



Connectors are especially important in subtopic sentences. For more on connectors, see pp. 288–289.



For more on concluding sentences, see pp. 284–286.

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off guard when I tripped on a pebble in the road. Head over heals, I won the race with a broken arm.

Finally the scariest and most dangerous time of all. Sledding on an abandoned ski hill in Park city, Utah. My goal was to sled down from where none of the other kids' would go, the top! My brother an I walked, and walked, and walked and finally we were there, with the white mountain spread out below us. My inner tube was my tobbogan. 1, 2, 3, GO!!!! Swishing gently from side to side, I increased my speed. Faster and faster I bounced toward the bottom. Suddenly, out of nowhere came a tin shed, I leaned hard to the right, and begun to spin around. One last hard bump and I went flipping and flying through the air, and landed in a bank of trees. I don't remember much after being knocked unconscious. When I woke up people were standing in a big circle around me. I was woozy and crying and my head hurt, but I was still alive.

Having survived my crazy childhood, I am more cautious these days, but I still love adventure—anyone up for a little skydiving?

Added details and explanations are underlined.

Subtopic sentences are highlighted.

Added connectors are boxed.

Note the details Crystal added to this example.

Crystal also revised her concluding sentence.

Second-Draft Revision Points

When you begin to look critically at your own second draft, take a few minutes to review these revision points. They will help you write a stronger draft.

1. **How well have you used specific language?** All writing uses both general and specific words, but specific words sharpen an image. Which of these sentences creates a more vivid picture?
   a. A person was doing something there.
   b. Tiger Woods was driving the golf ball 220 yards down the fairway.
2. **How thoroughly have you developed sensory details?** Descriptive and narrative writing in particular needs details of sight, sound, touch, smell, taste; information-based and persuasive writing can benefit from these details too. Which of these sentences creates a stronger image?
   a. As I near the arcade, I see the change machine, stuffed animals, and food.
   b. As I near the arcade, I hear the jingling of tokens falling from the change machine, see the colorful stuffed animals—pink poodles, purple bears, orange-and-black striped tigers—and smell the sweet aroma of the hot, sugar-coated funnel cakes.

HINT

For more on specific language, see pp. 309–310.

HINT

For more on sensory details, see p. 310.

3. **Are you choosing "active" verbs to describe action?** Interesting writing uses verbs that show specific action rather than more general verbs (such as *be, do, have, make*). Which of the following sentences seems more interesting?

   a. The giant black bull made his way across the field as I moved away from him toward the white board fence.

   b. The giant black bull galloped toward me as I raced across the field, struggling to reach the white board fence 50 yards away.

4. **Are you using any *-ing* words?** Present participles (a verb form with an *-ing* ending) can also convey action well. Which of the following sentences creates the sharper image?

   a. My foot got caught on the pedal, and the ATV flipped over on me in the creek.

   b. My foot got caught on the pedal, and the ATV flipped, slamming me to the bottom of the creek and landing on top of me.

5. **Are the sentences in your paragraph varied in length?** The structure of your sentences alone can make your writing more or less interesting. If you find more than four sentences in a row that are roughly the same length—for instance, 14, 17, 12, and 15 words—either combine two of them or divide a longer one.

6. **Are the beginnings of your sentences varied?** If even two sentences in a row in your draft begin with the same word or phrase, such as *the*, try changing an opening or combining sentences to break up the pattern. Also, look for too many similar openings, even if the sentences are not next to one another.

7. **Have you repeated a word or phrase so often that it becomes noticeable?** While some repetition is fine, too much of the same word group becomes boring.

8. **Have you included words that serve no purpose?** Everyday speech is full of unneeded words, but writing should not be. Cluttered writing can bore and confuse, while concise writing involves the reader and clarifies ideas. Which of the following sentences seems concise?

   a. Junk e-mail, the kind of e-mail that comes into my account from strangers and without me even wanting it, is one of the many online distractions that causes me to waste all of my valuable time.

   b. Junk e-mail is one of my time wasters.



For more on active verbs, see Chapters 3 and 4.



For more on *-ing* endings, see Chapter 5.



For more on overall sentence variety, see Chapter 32.



For more on variety in sentence openers, see pp. 500–502.



For more on unnecessary repetition and unneeded words, see pp. 506–510.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 20.2

List three *specific* changes you have made or feel you ought to make in your second draft. Refer to the Second-Draft Revision Points listed previously, answering each specifically. Next, in a sentence or two say what you like best about your draft so far.

Revising Final Drafts

After your major organizational and material concerns are dealt with, you can begin to polish your draft, fine-tuning it for style and editing for correctness. This is good time to have others read your work to be sure not only that they can follow your ideas but also that you have used specific and vivid language to express them.

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Other eyes can also often see editing errors that the author's might be missing. Notice how many errors Crystal was able to catch, with the help of a peer editor, in this draft:

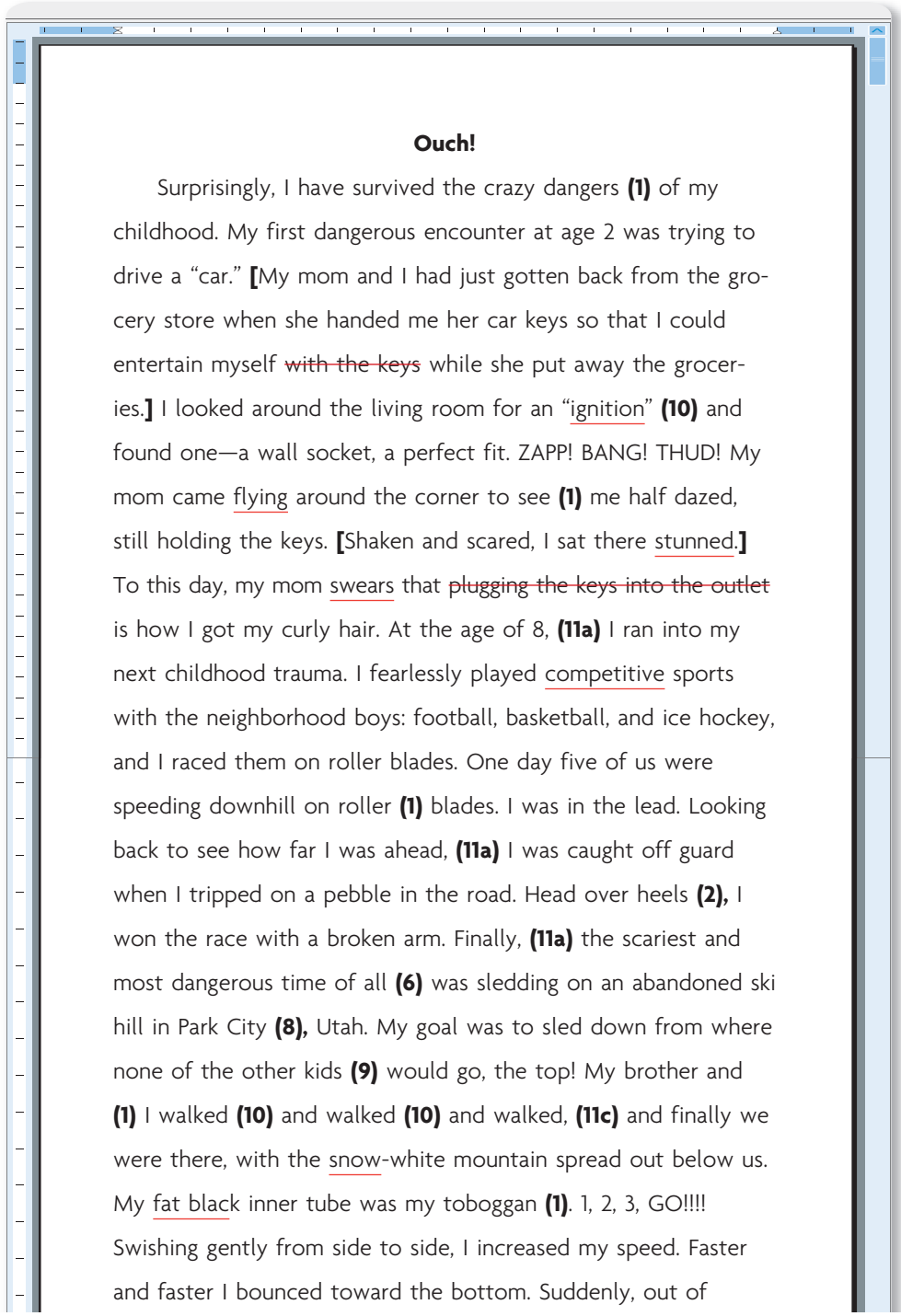
- Specific word choice: underlined
- ~~Unneeded repetition~~ of words: lined through
- [Sentence variety]: bracketed
- Editing conventions: **(1–11)**; see the Editing Key next to the paragraph

FINAL DRAFT

NOTE: Crystal also revised her title.

Editing key

1. misspellings
2. sound-alike words
3. missing words
4. pronoun reference and agreement
5. verb errors
6. sentence fragments
7. comma splices/run-ons
8. faulty capitalizations
9. incorrect apostrophes
10. unneeded commas
11. needed commas
    a. introductory word/phrase/clause
    b. nonessential word group
    c. main clauses with coordinating conjunctions



Ouch!

Surprisingly, I have survived the crazy dangers **(1)** of my childhood. My first dangerous encounter at age 2 was trying to drive a "car." **[**My mom and I had just gotten back from the grocery store when she handed me her car keys so that I could entertain myself ~~with the keys~~ while she put away the groceries.**]** I looked around the living room for an "ignition" **(10)** and found one—a wall socket, a perfect fit. ZAPP! BANG! THUD! My mom came flying around the corner to see **(1)** me half dazed, still holding the keys. **[**Shaken and scared, I sat there stunned.**]** To this day, my mom swears that ~~plugging the keys into the outlet~~ is how I got my curly hair. At the age of 8, **(11a)** I ran into my next childhood trauma. I fearlessly played competitive sports with the neighborhood boys: football, basketball, and ice hockey, and I raced them on roller blades. One day five of us were speeding downhill on roller **(1)** blades. I was in the lead. Looking back to see how far I was ahead, **(11a)** I was caught off guard when I tripped on a pebble in the road. Head over heels **(2),** I won the race with a broken arm. Finally, **(11a)** the scariest and most dangerous time of all **(6)** was sledding on an abandoned ski hill in Park City **(8),** Utah. My goal was to sled down from where none of the other kids **(9)** would go, the top! My brother and **(1)** I walked **(10)** and walked **(10)** and walked, **(11c)** and finally we were there, with the snow-white mountain spread out below us. My fat black inner tube was my toboggan **(1)**. 1, 2, 3, GO!!!! Swishing gently from side to side, I increased my speed. Faster and faster I bounced toward the bottom. Suddenly, out of

nowhere came a tin shed. **(7)** I leaned hard to the right **(10)** and began **(5)** to spin out of control. One last hard bump and I went flipping and flying through the air **(10)** and landed in some pine trees. I don't remember much after being knocked unconscious. When I woke up, **(11a)** people were standing in a big circle and staring down at me. I was woozy and crying, **(11c)** and my head hurt, but I was still alive. Having survived my crazy childhood, I am more cautious these days, but I still love adventure—anyone up for a little skydiving?

—*Crystal Lockner*

Final-Draft Revision Points

When you begin to look critically at your own final draft, take a few minutes to make revisions stronger by reviewing these editing points.

EDITING POINTERS

1. **Spelling:** Use your spell checker *and* a dictionary, and then have someone else read for misspellings (Chapter 17).
2. **Sound-alike words:** Edit for common sound-alike words like these: *there/their/they're, to/too, then/than, your/you're*. Adding sound-alike errors to your **Improvement Chart** (at the back of this book) will help you memorize them.
3. **Missing words:** Read slowly. Read. . . very. . . slowly, covering the sentence ahead of the one you are editing to keep you from jumping ahead too quickly.
4. **Faulty pronoun reference and agreement:** Pronouns must refer to a specific noun (or pronoun), and they must agree in number with that noun (or pronoun).

   REFERENCE ERROR: Brandon spoke to Zachary as *he* entered the living room.
   (Who entered the room, Brandon or Zachary?)

   AGREEMENT ERROR: *Anyone* who tries *their* hardest should succeed.
   (*People* who try *their* hardest should succeed.)

5. **Faulty verb tense and agreement:** Verb tense must be consistent, and verbs must agree in number with their subjects. (See Chapter 5.)

   TENSE ERROR: During the show, people *laugh* and then *clapped* for an encore.
   (Keep both verbs in either present [*laugh/clap*] or past *[laughed/clapped]* tense.)

   AGREEMENT ERROR: During the show, one of the people *laugh* and *clap* for an encore.
   (*One* is a singular subject, so the verbs must agree: *laughs* and *claps*.)



For more examples of sound-alike words, see Chapter 17.



For information on pronoun problems, see Chapter 7.

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See Chapter 14 for help fixing fragments, comma splices, and run-ons.



Proper nouns name specific people, places, or things; see Chapter 6.



See pp. 233–234 for more on using apostrophes.



See Chapter 15 for detailed coverage of comma rules.

6. **Sentence fragments:** Remember two common types of incomplete sentences:

   PHRASE FRAGMENT: Climbing to the top of the hill.

   (This fragment lacks a subject and a verb.)

   SUBORDINATE CLAUSE FRAGMENT: When Rajiv climbed to the top of the hill.

   (This fragment has a subject and a verb, but the word *when* creates an incomplete thought.)

7. **Comma splices/run-ons:** These errors result from joining two sentences with only a comma or omitting punctuation between two sentences.

   COMMA SPLICE: Heavy metal continues to evolve, nu-metal is one recent form.

   RUN-ON: Heavy metal continues to evolve nu-metal is one recent form.

   Note: In dialogue avoid this kind of typical comma splice:

   INCORRECT: The President insisted, "I'm the decider, I'm the one who decides."

   CORRECT: The President insisted, "I'm the decider. I'm the one who decides."

8. **Capitalizations**: Capitalize proper nouns. In your title, capitalize most words, even little ones like *is* and *one*. But do not capitalize articles *(a, an, the)*, prepositions (*to, on, of, in*, etc.), and coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, so*, etc.) unless they begin or end the title or follow a colon.

9. **Apostrophes**: Use this punctuation to show ownership or mark the omission of a letter in a contraction: Gabriel's scholarship letter hasn't come yet.

10. **Unnecessary commas:** Look up or review comma rules. Guessing where commas belong often leads to misuses like the following:

    a. Josh wanted to go to the ball game, and then hoped to meet Kelsey later.

    (Josh is the only subject with the two-part verb *wanted* and *hoped*, so no comma is needed.)

    b. However, Josh was destined for disappointment, because Kelsey had a life and wasn't about to wait for him till 10 o'clock on a Friday night.

    (No comma is needed before the subordinate clause beginning with *because.)*

11. **The Big Three comma categories:** These three categories govern perhaps half the common uses of the comma:

    a. Use commas to introduce single words, phrases, and subordinate adverb clauses before a main clause (cues: *because, if, when, -ing*, etc.) (pp. 214–217).

    Because I love to fly fish, I'm headed for Colorado next week.

    b. Use commas to enclose *nonessential* words, phrases, or clauses within a main clause or to set them off at the end of a main clause (cues: *who/which, -ing*) (pp. 217–221).

    I will stay in Buena Vista, *which* is a town of around 3,000, for two nights, fish*ing* the Arkansas River and some nearby creeks.

    c. Use commas to divide main clauses joined by *and/but* (*or, so, yet, for, nor*) (pp. 222–223).

Next, I will backpack up to the Continental Divide, and there I will fish several alpine lakes at about 11,000 feet.

After you have edited as closely as you know how to, it's time to get some help. Every writer—professional and beginner—benefits from having others look closely at his or her work. You will undoubtedly spend some class time in collaborative editing sessions, but don't stop there. Work with your instructor, and visit your writing center, where you can get help in all phases of the writing process, including editing.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 18.3

Your draft should be in good shape now, with important details in place, words carefully chosen, and sentences flowing well. Slowly edit your paper—syllable by syllable, word by word, line by line, stopping often. Write down at least three errors from your draft, and then show the corrections. What steps are you taking to avoid repeating these errors?

FEEDBACK *Trade semifinal drafts with at least two classmates. Using the "Final-Draft Revision Points" as a guide, respond to your classmates' drafts. When you get your own draft back, consider the feedback offered, and then note one suggestion that you found particularly helpful.*

HINT

Review your **Improvement Chart** (at the back of this book) to focus on pattern errors.



Proofreading

Proofreading is the last step in preparing your paper. After you have finished editing, print the final draft, or give it careful on-screen attention. Read through it closely; there are likely still a few errors to catch.

GUIDELINES FOR PROOFREADING AND PREPARING YOUR FINAL MANUSCRIPT

1. Check for typographical errors such as misspelled, run-together, and omitted words. Often when fixing errors in the editing stage, we slip up in small ways on the keyboard. **Be sure to spell check once again.**
2. Check the following items carefully: font size (12 point), line spacing (double space), margins (1 inch), title capitalization, and heading (upper left corner, double space).
3. Spell check any required material, such as outlines and audience profiles.
4. Staple or paper-clip your pages. Avoid putting the paper in a plastic sleeve.

HINT

Check the spelling of your professor's name.

HINT

Most instructors don't want to fish around in a plastic sleeve and then have to stuff the paper back in after evaluating it.

On the following pages you will find both a title page for a paper and a one-paragraph paper without a title page. Check with your instructor to see which format he or she prefers. Notice that the title in both cases is neither underlined nor enclosed in quotation marks, and all information is double-spaced.

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TITLE PAGE

- Title centered
- 12-point font
- No underline
- No quotation marks
- All information double-spaced

Ouch!

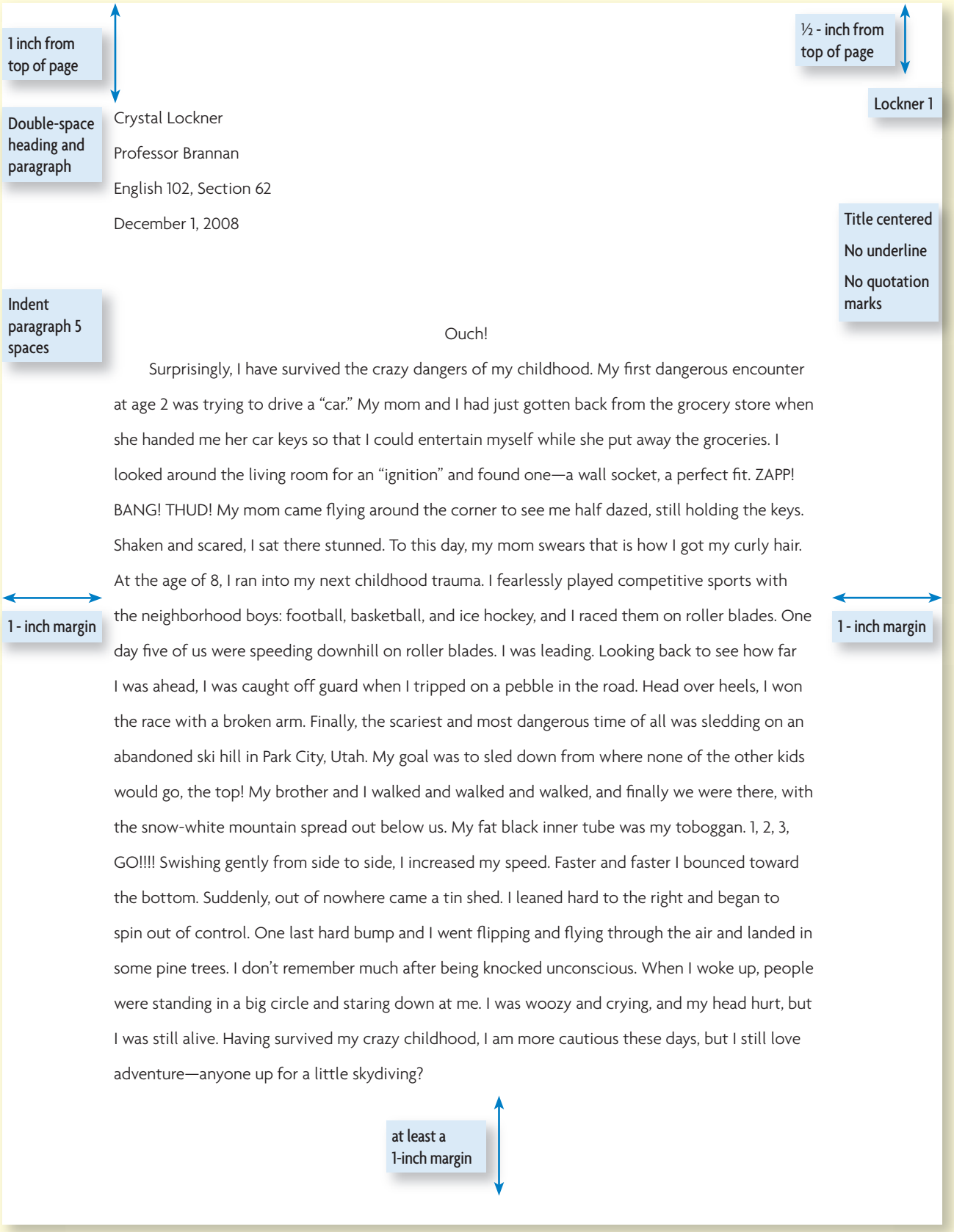
by

Crystal Lockner

English 102, Section 62

Professor Brannan

December 1, 2008


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Lockner 1
Double-space heading and paragraph
Crystal Lockner
Professor Brannan
English 102, Section 62
December 1, 2008
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Ouch!
Surprisingly, I have survived the crazy dangers of my childhood. My first dangerous encounter at age 2 was trying to drive a "car." My mom and I had just gotten back from the grocery store when she handed me her car keys so that I could entertain myself while she put away the groceries. I looked around the living room for an "ignition" and found one—a wall socket, a perfect fit. ZAPP! BANG! THUD! My mom came flying around the corner to see me half dazed, still holding the keys. Shaken and scared, I sat there stunned. To this day, my mom swears that is how I got my curly hair.
At the age of 8, I ran into my next childhood trauma. I fearlessly played competitive sports with the neighborhood boys: football, basketball, and ice hockey, and I raced them on roller blades. One day five of us were speeding downhill on roller blades. I was leading. Looking back to see how far I was ahead, I was caught off guard when I tripped on a pebble in the road. Head over heels, I won the race with a broken arm. Finally, the scariest and most dangerous time of all was sledding on an abandoned ski hill in Park City, Utah. My goal was to sled down from where none of the other kids would go, the top! My brother and I walked and walked and walked, and finally we were there, with the snow-white mountain spread out below us. My fat black inner tube was my toboggan. 1, 2, 3, GO!!!! Swishing gently from side to side, I increased my speed. Faster and faster I bounced toward the bottom. Suddenly, out of nowhere came a tin shed. I leaned hard to the right and began to spin out of control. One last hard bump and I went flipping and flying through the air and landed in some pine trees. I don't remember much after being knocked unconscious. When I woke up, people were standing in a big circle and staring down at me. I was woozy and crying, and my head hurt, but I was still alive. Having survived my crazy childhood, I am more cautious these days, but I still love adventure—anyone up for a little skydiving?
1 - inch margin
1 - inch margin
at least a 1-inch margin

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 20.4

Spend a moment reflecting on your work in and out of class in producing this paragraph assignment. Then take 5 minutes to write a paragraph about the challenges you had to overcome, how you dealt with them, and the strategies you think might be most important to apply to your upcoming writing assignments this semester.



SAVE PAPER AND PRINTING COSTS

Instead of printing out multiple drafts, try revising on the computer. Most word-processing programs, such as Microsoft Word, offer opportunities to "track" your edits. Try saving each draft as a separate file; then you can use the "compare documents" function to see how your draft has developed and changed through revision. ●



ACTIVITY 20.1 WORKING ONLINE: *Revising and Editing Practice*

Practice revising sentences and a brief paragraph at http://www.cba.bgsu.edu/faculty_staff/greenwald/Revising%20Exercise.htm.



ACTIVITY 20.2 WORKING ONLINE: *Revision Review*

At www.mhhe.com/brannan, test yourself on paragraph revision techniques by taking the Chapter 20 Review Quiz.

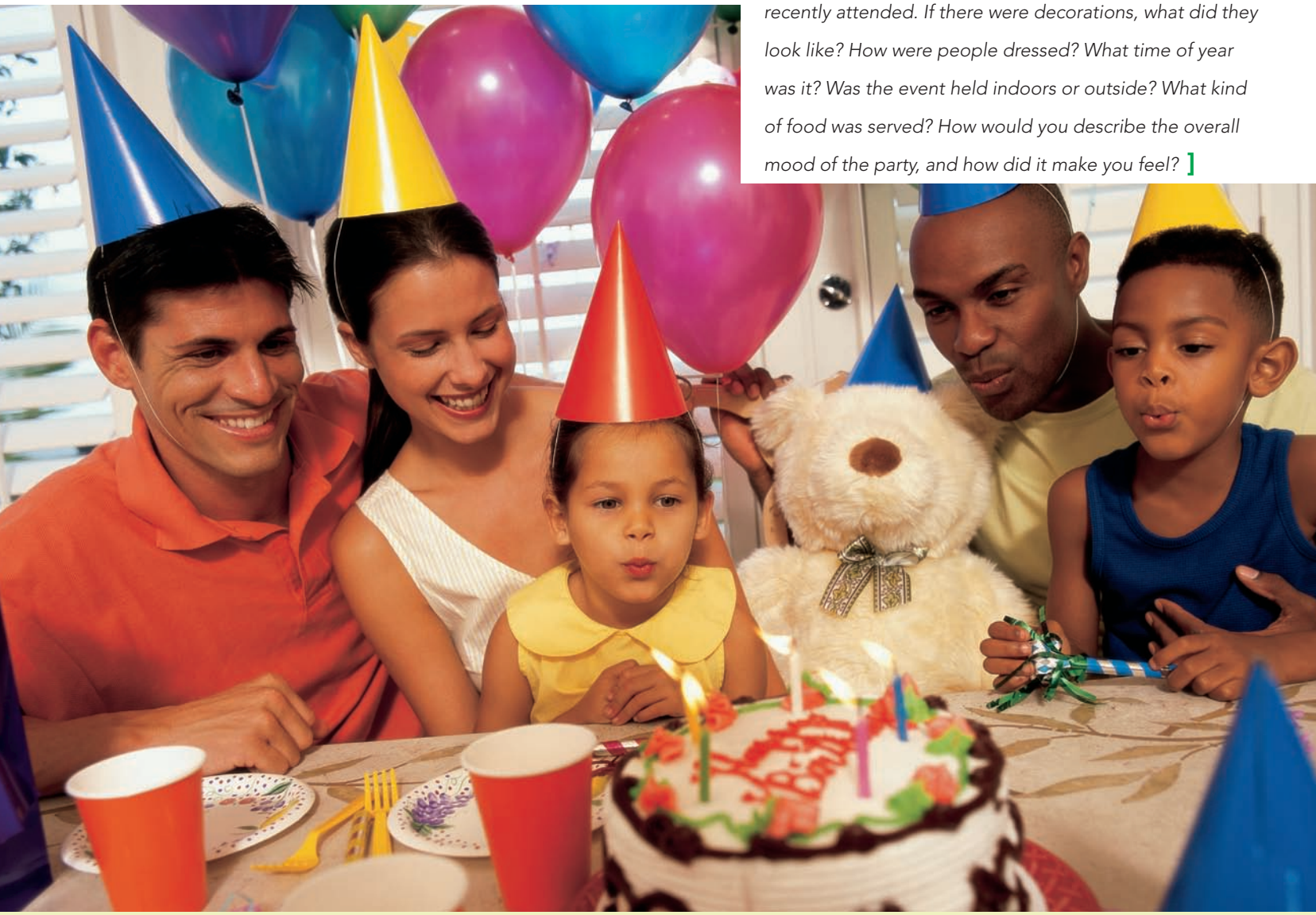
Chapter Summary

1. Revising a paragraph or an essay is a multi-step process; at each stage of revision, you will address different concerns.
2. For help with revising first drafts, see pages 294–297.
3. For information on revising second drafts, see pages 297–299.
4. For help revising final drafts, see pages 299–303.
5. For guidelines on proofreading and preparing your final manuscript, see pages 303–305.

Describing a Place (Description)

21

[*Using specific details, describe a celebration or party you recently attended. If there were decorations, what did they look like? How were people dressed? What time of year was it? Was the event held indoors or outside? What kind of food was served? How would you describe the overall mood of the party, and how did it make you feel?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in describing
  - Using specific language
  - Using the five senses
  - Creating a dominant impression
  - Organizing details spatially
  - Using space and time transitions
- Learning from a student model
- Writing a descriptive paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

If asked to **describe** (or paint a verbal image of) the scene in this photograph, you'd probably offer both a general overview—it's a birthday party—and specific details—colorful balloons and party hats, brightly colored cups and forks, and the centerpiece: a decorated birthday cake. Details help us describe a scene to someone who isn't there or can't see (or otherwise experience) it. Beyond listing physical details, you could consider the overall theme or mood of the scene. Words like *happiness*, *family togetherness*, and *joy* help capture the picture's **dominant impression**, the overall feeling that gives it a point, or purpose.

In this chapter we will focus on **description** in writing. People use words to describe many things—other people, objects, places, even experiences. Vivid descriptions call for **specific words** and **sensory details**, so they challenge writers to use language with particular care. The focus in this chapter will be to describe a place that you know well and want to show people who have not been there.

Linking to Previous Experience

What You Already Know about Description

We describe almost every day. When telling a friend about your vacation, you might describe a trip to Daytona Beach, Florida: the golden sand, the warm blue-green ocean water, the air's salty taste, and the bright purple Portuguese man-of-war you swam quickly away from. Or when giving directions, you might describe your house or apartment building so that someone can find it (the beige ranch-style home with the red composite shingle roof, the brownstone with the "No Loitering" sign on the front door and potted sunflowers on the stoop). Perhaps someone wants to know what kind of pet you own, and you respond by describing the ball of chocolate fur you recently adopted—its white eye patches, white-tipped ears, and very sharp puppy teeth. You have been describing since you could first talk. This chapter will help you get better at it.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 21.1

Name three things, people, or places you have described recently (such as a new car, a family member, or a workplace). Choose one and write several sentences of description, being sure to include details. What do you like best about your description? What part would you like to make clearer?

FEEDBACK *Share and comment on each other's descriptions. What do you like best about a classmate's piece of writing? What do you want to know more about?*



Developing Skills in Describing

The following skills will help you create more vivid descriptions:

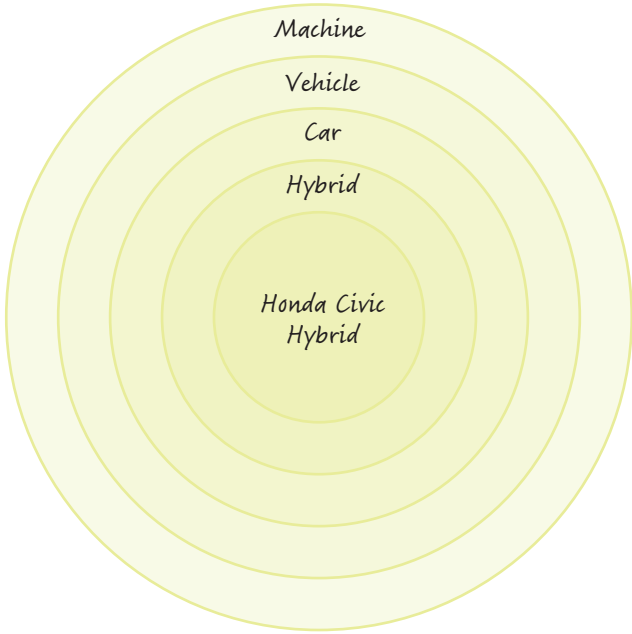
1. Using specific language
2. Using the five senses
3. Creating a dominant impression
4. Organizing details spatially
5. Using space and time transitions



Use a dictionary and a thesaurus to build your vocabulary and help you avoid repeating words.

Using Specific Language

Words can be either relatively **general** or relatively **specific**, belonging to a larger or a smaller grouping. For example, there are many types of machines (a large word grouping): computers, motorcycles, cell phones, cars, and so on. So if you want to talk about a *kind* of machine, then you would use a more specific word (such as *car*) to describe the machine. Each time you give a more specific name to something, you further limit the group to which it belongs. Below, you can see this principle illustrated as a bull's-eye: the most specific word in the center belongs to the smallest group:



When writers want to create the clearest picture possible, they choose the most specific word they can find and then add describing words to it, for example, *a sleek silver-gray 2008 Honda Civic Hybrid.*

ACTIVITY 21.1 Narrowing the Group

For each of the words in column A, first think of a more specific word for column B; then add a describing word in column C. Use numbers 1 and 2 as examples.

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A	B	C
1. machine	computer	Dell notebook
2. music	rock	classic
3. sport		
4. food		
5. vacation		
6. movie		

Using the Five Senses

When we describe, we can create vivid images by using specific words and details, many of which appeal to our five senses. Most writers tend to rely heavily on **sight** and **sound** but may overlook **touch**, **smell**, and **taste**. Read the two examples below, and decide which of them involves you more as a reader.

1. Worlds of Fun is one of my favorite places. People seem to have fun there on the rides, at the arcades, and at the concession stands. I like the food too.
2. Worlds of Fun is one of my favorite places to spend a day off. As I listen, I hear the sounds of laughter filling the air. Walking closer to the arcade, I hear the jingling sound of the tokens as they fall from the change machine. The people's faces glow as the tickets dispense. Colorful stuffed animals—pink poodles, purple bears, orange tigers—decorate the ceiling and walls of the arcade. At the concession stand I smell the sweet aroma of the apple-covered funnel cakes and taste the sweet powdered sugar. The fizz of strawberry soda tingles my nose and makes me forget for a moment that I have to work the next day.



A good description relies on the quality, not quantity, of details.

In the second example, specific words and sensory details help readers enjoy a good description. Without details, the first example fails to convey a sense of what the experience was like.

ACTIVITY 21.2 Finding Sensory Details

Reread the second paragraph about Worlds of Fun and, in the columns below, list all the sensory details. Remember that sight words are often combined with other sense details.

Sight	Sound	Touch	Smell	Taste
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Creating a Dominant Impression

To focus a descriptive paragraph, writers bring specific words, sensory details, thoughts, and feelings together to form a **dominant impression**, or overall feeling. For example, what would you say is the overall feeling the author wanted readers to take from the second Worlds of Fun description on page 310? If you said "fun" or "enjoyment," you have found the dominant impression. Without some way to focus a description, it is difficult to make a point about what you are describing. For instance, can you find a dominant impression or point in the following paragraph?

1. My bedroom is a place where I spend a lot of time. The walls are a pale gold, and the baseboards are white. My closet door has wooden slats to let the air conditioning and heat flow through. I have a desk with two lamps, a computer monitor, and some magazines. There is a poster of The Fray on the wall next to an entertainment center, which holds my 27-inch HD TV and stereo.

Although there are some good specific words and sensory details in the passage above, the description does not have a point, so we are not sure what the author is trying to tell us about his room. Contrast example 1 with the following example, and try to decide what this author's point is:

2. My bedroom is my refuge from the world. Standing in the doorway, I can feel the thickly padded gold carpet, cool beneath my bare feet. Across from the doorway, 15 feet to the far wall, is my queen-sized bed, with four medium-firm pillows propped up against the padded headboard. This is my favorite place to read and do homework that doesn't require my computer. On the right side of my bed is a nightstand with a tall wooden lamp that makes it easy for me to read the *Rolling Stone* and *Sports Illustrated* magazines lying there. Centered against one wall is my entertainment center, with my stereo on top, DVD player under it, and my 27-inch HD TV under that. I'm listening to "Over My Head," a Fray tune that puts me at ease. On the other side of the room next to a window is my oak desk, complete with a Dell desktop and 19-inch LCD monitor. I use my computer more for surfing online and talking to friends than for homework, but it does come in handy for papers like these. All in all, after a day on the job and three classes at the college, I'm happy to get back to my safe, relaxing bedroom.

If you decided that "refuge from the world," "safety," "security," or "restfulness" is the author's point about his room, you identified the dominant impression.

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ACTIVITY 21.3 WORKING TOGETHER: *Creating a Dominant Impression*



In the preceding example 2, the author clearly states in his topic sentence his dominant impression, "refuge from the world," and repeats it in his concluding sentence with "safe, relaxing bedroom." Discuss with group members what phrases in the paragraph help establish this impression, and list them below. Two are written as examples.

the thickly padded gold carpet, cool beneath my bare feet

my favorite place to read



Organizing Details Spatially

An effective way to arrange the details of a descriptive paragraph is **spatially**, or from one point in space to another. This approach helps readers more easily see what is being presented. In describing a place—whether it's a room indoors or an outdoor space—you might begin with close details and then zoom out, or move from one side to another, move from bottom to top, or even describe as you walk through the place.

ACTIVITY 21.4 *Organizing Descriptions*

The following lists of place details are jumbled. Read through them, and then number the details using the spatial arrangement given in parentheses, with 1 as the first detail in a paragraph and 6 as the last.

EXAMPLE:

Topic sentence: The waiting room in my dentist's office is a place of high anxiety. (*Arrange details from outside to in.*)

5 On the wall in front of the receptionist's desk, there is a picture of an open mouth full of tooth decay and bleeding gums.

1 In the parking lot a mother tugs her resisting 8-year-old from a car.

6 The receptionist asks, "So are you coming for that root canal today?"

2 The windows are darkly tinted so that it is hard to see in or out.

4 One teenage patient near the entrance is sweating and squirming in his seat.

3 When I enter the office, I hear the high-pitched whine of a dental drill.

1. **Topic sentence:** My school cafeteria during lunch hour is a busy place. (*Arrange details from your seat at a table some distance from the cashiers and food court, and move from close up to farther away.*)

___ On the side of the food court are the Pizza Hut, KFC, Subway, and Burger King stalls, where employees are pulling pizzas from ovens, dropping chicken wings into deep fat fryers, slicing bread, and wrapping hamburgers.

___ Several 32-inch flat screen TVs about 30 feet away are blaring out the football game.

___ Past the cashiers, in the middle of the food court, students and teachers cluster around the salad bar, shoveling lettuce, tomatoes, olives, cheese, and sunflower seeds onto their plates.

___ Every other table is full of people eating and carrying food trays back and forth.

___ My four friends are laughing, joking with each other, and eating all at once.

___ Three cashiers frantically ring up food as dozens of people push their brown trays up to them.

2. **Topic sentence:** There is often so much wildlife in my backyard that a nature special could be filmed there. (*Arrange details from bottom to top.*)

___ Five feet above the ground hangs a red plastic bird feeder with one chickadee and five sparrows flapping their wings and eating greedily.

___ Circling overhead, waiting for an unwary bird, is a red-tailed hawk.

___ In the grass three chipmunks scurry about, snatching seeds spilling from the bird feeder as a baby rabbit looks on.

___ Higher up in the trees two gray squirrels also prepare to descend on the feast.

___ In the branches of an elm tree, a watchful male cardinal and a bluejay consider diving down onto the feeder to snatch some food for themselves.

___ A series of raised tunnels in the grass show me where the moles are at work again.

Using Space and Time Transitions

As we learned in Chapter 19, linking sentences with connectors, such as repeated words, synonyms, and transitions, is essential if readers are to follow the flow of your ideas. Descriptions especially benefit from **space** and **time** transitions like the following:



For a more complete list of transitions, turn to pp. 288–289.



Review this chart to master prepositions involving time, space, and direction.

SPACE TRANSITIONS

above	at	in	on	to
against	below	into	over	toward
around	by	near	there	under

TIME TRANSITIONS

after	now	then	references to clock and calendar time: 1:00, last week, etc.
first (second, etc.)	often	until	
next	once	when	

ACTIVITY 21.5 *Using Space and Time Transitions*

Fill in the blanks with the time and space transitions from the lists above.

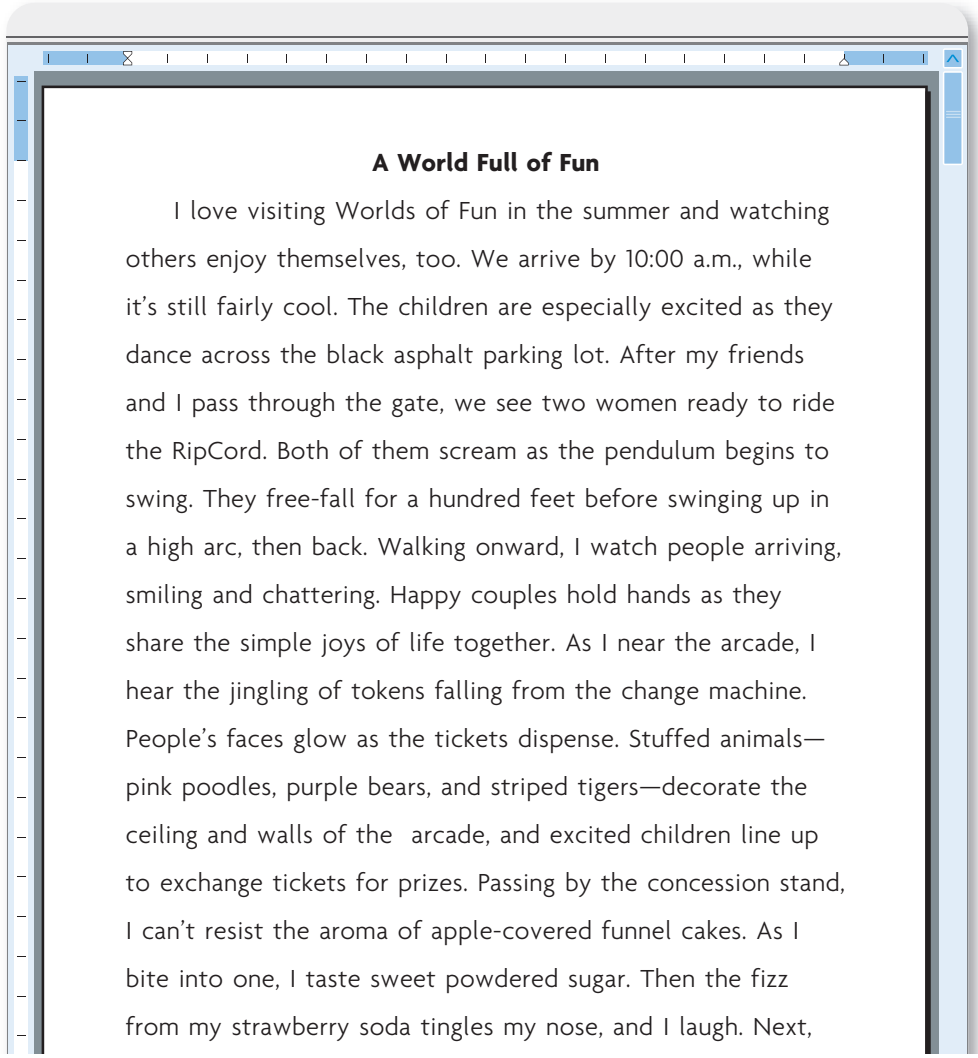
1. The water pours _____ the falls.
2. Willow trees hang _____ the yard, giving welcome shade.
3. Deanna climbed _____ her Hummer, hoping she had enough gas to drive around the block.

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4. We looked _____ the bench and everywhere else for the lost cell phone.
5. _____ Concei made it _____ the rapids, she sighed in relief.
6. Drops of water arch out from the fountain and _____ tumble onto the stones below.
7. Carla and Denice waited at Sonic for Lauren _____ they could wait no longer.
8. _____ we will discuss why extreme sports don't much appeal to people over 30.

Learning from a Student Model: A Descriptive Paragraph

Read the **following** student model closely. Try to find and identify the elements of vivid description you've practiced in this chapter: **specific words**, **sensory details**, a clear **dominant impression**, **spatial organization**, and solid **space and time transitions**.



A World Full of Fun

I love visiting Worlds of Fun in the summer and watching others enjoy themselves, too. We arrive by 10:00 a.m., while it's still fairly cool. The children are especially excited as they dance across the black asphalt parking lot. After my friends and I pass through the gate, we see two women ready to ride the RipCord. Both of them scream as the pendulum begins to swing. They free-fall for a hundred feet before swinging up in a high arc, then back. Walking onward, I watch people arriving, smiling and chattering. Happy couples hold hands as they share the simple joys of life together. As I near the arcade, I hear the jingling of tokens falling from the change machine. People's faces glow as the tickets dispense. Stuffed animals—pink poodles, purple bears, and striped tigers—decorate the ceiling and walls of the arcade, and excited children line up to exchange tickets for prizes. Passing by the concession stand, I can't resist the aroma of apple-covered funnel cakes. As I bite into one, I taste sweet powdered sugar. Then the fizz from my strawberry soda tingles my nose, and I laugh. Next,

we pass the Timber Wolf, which shakes and groans, making the passengers scream in delighted terror. *I'm* looking forward to the Mamba and the Orient Express. To my left gamers win at ring toss, and in front of me a mother and daughter use their squirt guns to win prizes. Just seeing the excitement on their faces makes me happy. Worlds of Fun is my favorite place on a summer day, and it makes me feel as if I know a "world" of people who enjoy the same fun that I do.

—Kamiasha Moses

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THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What point does Kamiasha make in her last sentence?
4. How does the action description add to the dominant impression?
5. Name three specific words, and tell how they create an image in your mind.
6. List several sensory details. How do they add to the dominant impression?
7. List at least three time and three space transitions.
8. How does the author arrange her details? Is this spatial organization?
9. What three details or specific words could you add to further improve this description?

Writing a Descriptive Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a single paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that paints a verbal portrait of a place. This place can be either indoors or outdoors and should be limited in size. Be sure to focus your description with an overall point or feeling (dominant impression).

Audience and Purpose

After you choose a place, think about how familiar your audience may be with it. Kamiasha Moses assumes that her readers know about Worlds of Fun and may even have experienced it; therefore, she does not feel the need to say that the Timber Wolf is a roller coaster. As you draft your paragraph, knowing who

your audience is will help you determine which words or concepts you may need to explain further. In description, your purpose is to inform readers, to help them see the place you're describing as clearly as possible.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Descriptive Paragraphs



Feeling a strong connection to a place will help you focus your description through a dominant impression.

There are probably hundreds of places you could write about, so it might be hard to pick one. Try limiting your choices to places you know well, have been to recently, can go to again, and have strong feelings about. Perhaps you have a peaceful place where you walk, bike, or jog? The following list might give you some ideas:

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR DESCRIPTION

Inside Places		
airport terminal	gym	restaurant
arcade	hardware store	schoolroom
auto repair shop	library	subway station
cafeteria	movie theater	tattoo/piercing shop
dance studio	museum	toy store
day-care center	nature center	train station
grocery store	pet store	veterinary clinic
Outside Places		
amusement park	fountain	stadium
basketball court	garden	swimming pool
beach	historic site	tennis court
car wash	outdoor concert	playground
cemetery	parking lot	wildlife sanctuary
construction site	racetrack (car, horse, dog)	woods
field	rodeo	zoo



Choose a place you can physically visit rather than trying to describe a place from memory.

After you have chosen a place, here are several suggestions for developing ideas:

1. Chose a limited space within a larger area. Indoors, don't try to describe your whole house; pick one room. Outdoors, the same applies. For example, choose one section of Padre Island, not all 63 miles of it.
2. Go to the place, sit quietly, and take notes. Use all of your senses, and list as many impressions as possible. Be alert to a **dominant impression**: is the place noticeably busy/peaceful, happy/sad, competitive/cooperative? Remember that people—and how they behave—are often part of descriptions.
3. Note the size of the place and the distance of objects from one another.
4. If people are present, write down some of their **dialogue**, or what they say to each other.
5. Try to think of a comparison, maybe a **metaphor** or a **simile** ("the crowd in the stadium rose like a tsunami").

DESCRIBE AN OUTDOOR SPACE

Write about a local public outdoor space: a park, an arboretum, a beach. Before beginning your paragraph, spend some time in the place. For your dominant impression, focus on (1) the particular beauty and purpose of the place, using details that show why it might provide something to you or the larger community, or (2) how people treat the space: is it well maintained, strewn with litter, visited frequently, usually deserted, and so on? ●



JOURNAL/BLOG ENTRY 21.2

Describe the overall feeling of your place in a word or two, and tell why you feel the way you do about it. This dominant impression might fall into several closely related categories: for instance, a family room could be physically comfortable and emotionally relaxing; a soccer game could be lively and competitive.

FEEDBACK *Share your dominant impressions among classmates. What are your own dominant impressions of places others describe (a campus cafeteria, for example) or of similar places (the common room in* your *apartment, a dance marathon)?*



Organizing Descriptive Paragraphs

After you have a list of details for your place and have decided on the dominant impression, cut any details that detract from your main point. For example, the "A World of Fun" student model (p. 314) does not include details of people arguing or children crying. Arrange your details in a roughly spatial order; this chapter's student model organizes details from the gates of Worlds of Fun to its center. Now, be sure to write a **topic sentence** that names the place and states the dominant impression.

JOURNAL/BLOG ENTRY 21.3

First, write out your topic sentence, including the specific place name and its dominant impression. Next, explain how you will arrange your paragraph in spatial order and why this arrangement makes sense to you.

Drafting Descriptive Paragraphs

As you begin to draft your description, keep the following points in mind:

1. Describe the place you have chosen, but do not tell a **story**, a series of actions connected in time and leading to a climax. Use action in your paragraph only to develop your dominant impression.
2. Use action, description, and dialogue if they fit into your place description.

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3. Occasionally, tell your reader what you think and feel about your place.
4. Use many specific words and sensory details in your first draft. In your next draft you can cut any that need to be removed.
5. Use enough space and time transitions to keep your reader on track.

JOURNAL/BLOG ENTRY 21.4

When you have finished your first rough draft, write paragraphs of four or five sentences each telling what you like most and then least about it. Be specific. For example, you might begin your first response this way: "I like the sight and sound details I have used" (name the details) and your second response like this: "I dislike that my dominant impression seems unclear."



For detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.

Revising Descriptive Paragraphs

As you begin revising the first draft of your description, use the following checklist as a guide:

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Does your paragraph describe a place? Or does it accidentally slip into telling a story?
- ☐ Have you used a strong topic sentence, naming the place and dominant impression?
- ☐ Have you focused your description with a dominant impression? What distracting details and commentary can you cut?
- ☐ Have you told your reader what you think and feel about your place?
- ☐ Have you used plenty of specific words and sensory details? If not, what could you add?
- ☐ Have you written a concluding sentence that renames the place and dominant impression and that makes a final point about the place?
- ☐ Have you used sufficient time and space transitions and other connectors?



For more on transitions and connectors, see pp. 288–289.

Alternate Assignments

Describing a place is only one way to use description. If you choose one of these alternate assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Create a dominant impression, and state it in your topic sentence.
- Use specific words and sensory details to develop your dominant impression.
- Conclude with a sentence that restates what you are describing and the dominant impression and that makes a final point about your subject.
- Connect sentences with time and space transitions.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Description

1. **Create a one-paragraph setting for a story** (fairy tale, science fiction, action/adventure, romance, or some other genre). Begin with a topic sentence that names the setting and states the dominant impression. For example, "The woods that Snow White ran into soon became threatening, seeming to want to tear her to bits." You can create your own character or tale setting or add to one you have read about or seen in film. *Note:* You are not writing a story, just creating a setting in which a story could be told.
2. **Describe an object that impresses you.** The object could be small but beautiful, like an intricately carved bowl or figurine; or the object could be huge, like an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico, Niagara Falls, or Mount Rushmore. Decide on the feeling you want to project—say, the power of falling water for Niagara Falls—and then choose details that show that power (the size of the falls, the roar of the water, the feel of the wind at the base of the falls, the way the water has eaten the rock away, and so forth).
3. **Place yourself inside the mind of a celebrity you admire** (sports star, rock star, movie star, political leader, and so forth). Write a paragraph of description from that person's perspective as he or she is "performing." For example, imagine you are Peyton Manning, of the Colts, in a Super Bowl playoff game. Position yourself on the field or sidelines, and describe your sensory impressions, thoughts, and feelings as you look over the field, the players on both teams, the coaches, the media, and the fans. What overall feeling might Manning have on a game day like this—excitement, anxiety, other? How can you show this dominant impression, this feeling, through your description? You could try a description of the person in action, as in this photograph of a football player.



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Linking to Future Experience

Description is a necessary ingredient in almost any writing assignment. Whether you want to bring a persuasive paragraph to life (Chapter 29) or describe a person or place in a narrative (Chapter 22), skill at description will come in handy. Description keeps writing both focused and interesting; it narrows your topic through specificity and appeals to your readers' interest through details.

In almost any profession, you will also use description daily. People who work in sales or advertising use it to help customers imagine what it would be like to own the company's product. A history teacher brings ancient Greece or Colonial Virginia alive for students through description. A headhunter describes positions to job seekers and potential employees to employers. Seeking treatment,

a patient describes his or her own symptoms, and the nurse or doctor also communicates his or her condition through description.



ACTIVITY 21.6 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Describing a YouTube Video***

Go to www.youtube.com and choose a video (5 minutes or shorter) that you find entertaining and worth recommending to others. Watch it at least twice. Then, in a paragraph, describe the video to someone unfamiliar with it; help your audience visualize, hear, and understand what they haven't seen. Be sure to include a dominant impression and specific details.



ACTIVITY 21.7 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Description Review***

Test your understanding of descriptive techniques with Chapter 21's Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

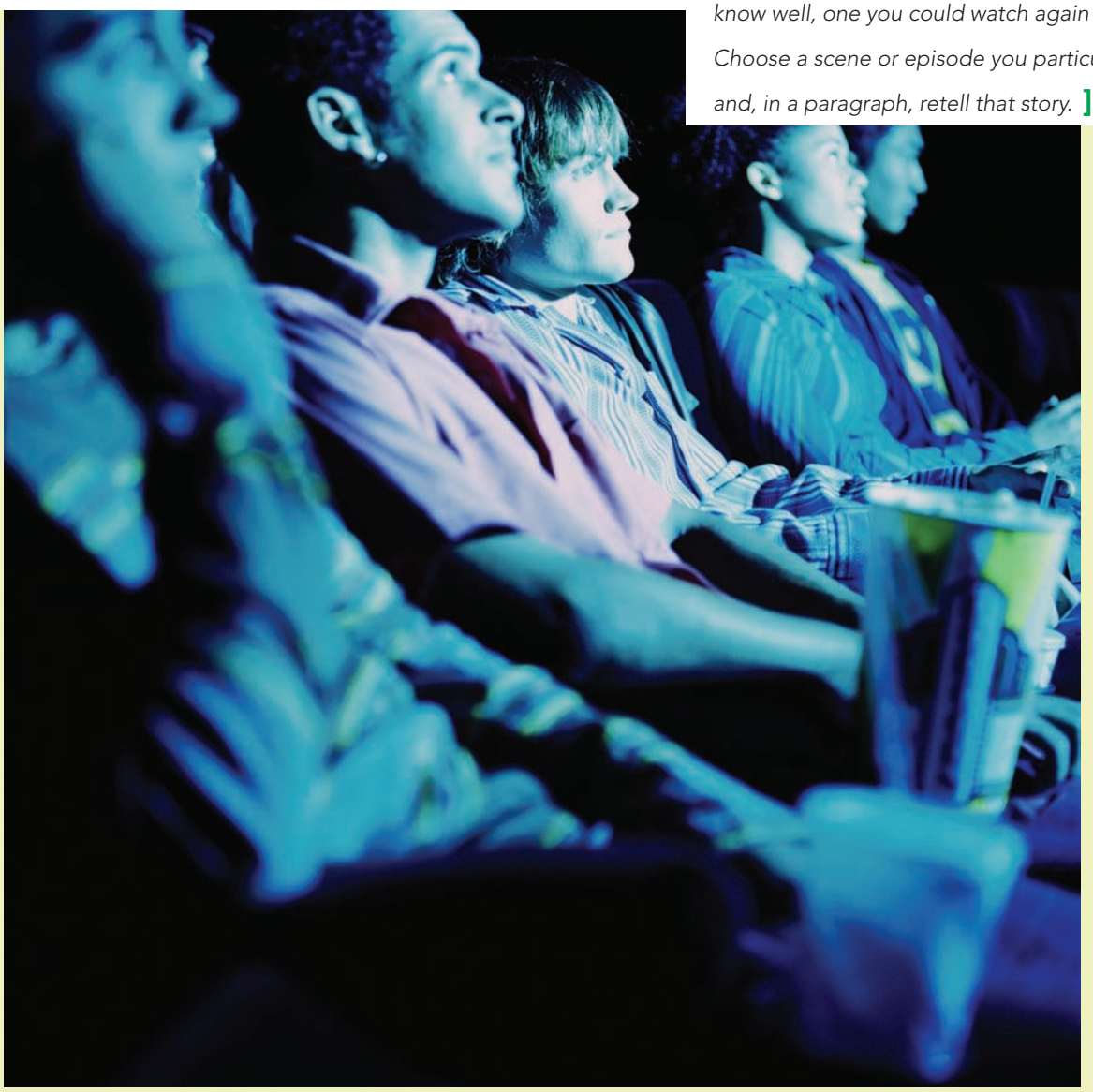
Chapter Summary

1. Describing is the process of using details to build vivid images.
2. Descriptive writing relies on specific words and sensory details.
3. Words can be relatively general or relatively specific—the more specific the word, the clearer the image.
4. Description is often found in narrative, informational, and persuasive writing.
5. Writers often focus descriptions with a dominant impression.
6. A topic sentence in a descriptive paragraph should include the place and dominant impression.
7. Descriptions are often organized spatially.
8. Time and space transitions are needed in descriptive writing.
9. Including thoughts and emotions strengthens subjective descriptions.
10. Action is often part of description.
11. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

Telling a Story (Narration)

22

[*Think of a movie or television show that you like and know well, one you could watch again and again. Choose a scene or episode you particularly enjoyed and, in a paragraph, retell that story.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in narrating
  - Emphasizing conflict, suspense, and a climax
  - Finding significance or meaning
  - Telling and showing
  - Using effective dialogue
  - Using space and time transitions
- Learning from a student model
- Writing a narrative paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

What are the people in the preceding picture doing? They sit with eyes turned forward and up, mesmerized, and one person eats popcorn: an audience is watching a movie. Films, most TV programs, novels, and short stories are forms of **narrative,** or storytelling. People often tell stories to entertain others, though they also use stories to help present information, warn, or persuade people. Our focus in this chapter is how to tell a story about ourselves, about some small but important moment in our lives.

Linking to Previous Experience

What You Already Know about Telling Stories

We tell stories almost every day. Sometimes these tales are long and involved: recapping your two-week vacation to Wyoming, you might cover the drive there, the places you stayed, your activities, and the great people you met along the way. At other times we share brief stories to keep others in touch with our lives or illustrate a larger point; we might tell the tale of a frustrating wait at the post office or about how the boss has been mistreating us. Sometimes we write stories in letters or e-mails. And how many of our phone conversations begin something like this: "You'll never guess what happened . . ." (the promise of a story) or "Hi, _____, what are you doing?" (a request for one)?

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 22.1

Summarize, in a few sentences each, three recent experiences. Who did you tell about them? What was your purpose in sharing these stories: to release frustration, give information, or persuade someone of something? Perhaps it was a mix of these? Was your audience unclear about any part of your story? If so, how did you make it clearer?

FEEDBACK *Respond to a classmate's three stories. Which event would you like to know more about? Ask a specific, relevant question about it.*



Developing Skills in Narrating

The following skills will help you create more interesting personal narratives:

1. Emphasizing conflict, suspense, and a climax
2. Finding significance or meaning
3. Telling and showing

4. Using effective dialogue
5. Using time and space transitions

Emphasizing Conflict, Suspense, and a Climax

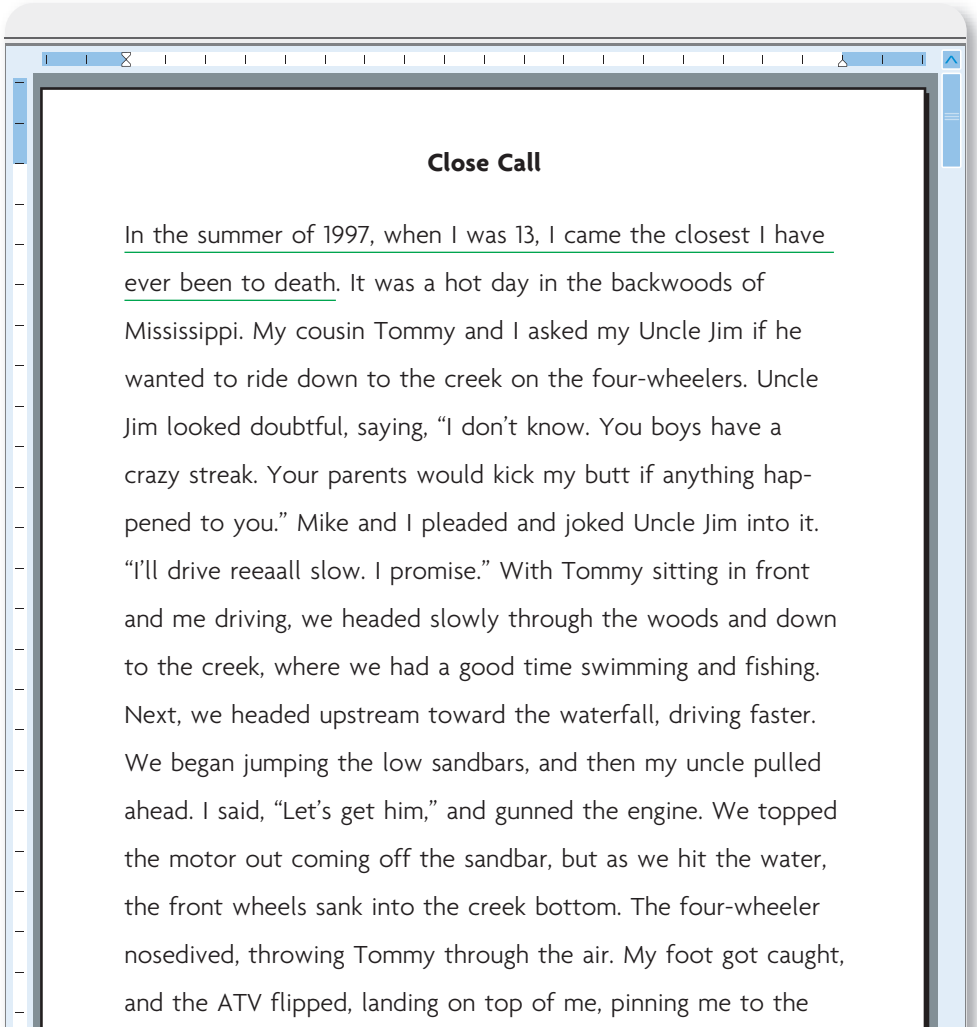
For a story to interest most people, it must have **conflict**—a problem or the potential for events to go wrong. This conflict can be of three sorts:

- A person dealing with another person: for example, arguing with a friend
- A person dealing with herself or himself: for example, trying a new exercise plan
- A person coping with the world around him or her: for example, driving in a blizzard

While presenting the conflict in the story, careful writers also build **suspense**, a state of uncertainty that makes readers wonder what will happen next. You should try to keep your readers in suspense right up until the **climax** (the high point of action) of your story.

Let's look at these elements of conflict, suspense, and climax in the following narrative paragraph written by student Andrew Lucht.

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Close Call

In the summer of 1997, when I was 13, I came the closest I have ever been to death. It was a hot day in the backwoods of Mississippi. My cousin Tommy and I asked my Uncle Jim if he wanted to ride down to the creek on the four-wheelers. Uncle Jim looked doubtful, saying, "I don't know. You boys have a crazy streak. Your parents would kick my butt if anything happened to you." Mike and I pleaded and joked Uncle Jim into it. "I'll drive reeaall slow. I promise." With Tommy sitting in front and me driving, we headed slowly through the woods and down to the creek, where we had a good time swimming and fishing. Next, we headed upstream toward the waterfall, driving faster. We began jumping the low sandbars, and then my uncle pulled ahead. I said, "Let's get him," and gunned the engine. We topped the motor out coming off the sandbar, but as we hit the water, the front wheels sank into the creek bottom. The four-wheeler nosedived, throwing Tommy through the air. My foot got caught, and the ATV flipped, landing on top of me, pinning me to the

Andrew begins with the topic sentence. Does it make you want to read on?

Notice that the author moves right into the action.

How does this dialogue from Uncle Jim add suspense?

Do the sentences about the ATV landing on top of the author and him being pinned add to the suspense?

bottom of the creek. I was stuck underwater. I couldn't get my head up for air. I couldn't move, yell for help, breathe—nothing. I saw my shoe float by on the surface and felt my chest begin to ache. I began to thrash my arms in panic, thinking, "I'm going to die!" But then my uncle arrived and flipped the four-wheeler off, pulling me above the water. I took the biggest, most welcome breath of my life. Although the ATV was smashed, Tommy only had a few scratches, and I didn't have even a bruise. I hadn't thought much about God before then, but that day I felt as if someone was watching over me. I was and still am grateful for how that makes me feel.

The author concludes with the resolution and point of the story.

ACTIVITY 22.1 *Noticing Conflict, Suspense, and Climax*

After reading the narrative paragraph "Close Call," write on the lines below what the main conflict is and how the writer builds suspense. Next, list the story's key moments in the "action outline" section; the first action is listed as an example. Finally, tell where the climax occurs.

Main conflict: _____

How the writer builds suspense: _____

_____

_____

Action outline:

1. *asking uncle about riding the ATV*
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Climax: _____

Finding Significance or Meaning

Stories that stick with us usually have a point. They make us pause for a moment and think, "Yes, that makes sense." Or maybe, "I see how that could apply to me." Although the meaning or significance of a story may not be clear to us

when we begin to write, if we are interested in telling the story and wonder why we remember it so vividly, we can usually identify why it matters.

A narrative's point might show how the story did or does one of the following:

1. Changed the writer's behavior, thinking, or feeling
2. Shows something important about who the writer was or has become
3. Affected other people at the time or affects them now
4. Helped the writer learn something about another person or the larger world

In "Close Call," Andrew Lucht tells us the significance of his experience, that he appreciates what he feels to be God's protection. Andrew implies a change in his thinking and feeling, as in suggestion 1 above. However, there may be more than one possible point to a story, and different people often feel differently about similar events.

ACTIVITY 22.2 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Finding Significance***



With group members, discuss how you would have felt in Andrew's place in "Close Call." Having just been saved from drowning, what thought or feeling might *you* take from this experience? Review the four points listed above under "Finding Significance or Meaning," and write on the lines below three possible points (in complete sentences) the story could have explored. One possibility is written out as an example.

Possible Points for "Close Call":

1. Changed behavior: I learned from that horrible day not to drive any kind of vehicle like a maniac.
2. Who the writer was: _____
3. Affected other people: _____
   _____
4. Learn about another person: _____
   _____

Telling and Showing

In telling stories, we try to bring them to life. However, if we only *tell* and never *show* the reader the action, our story is likely to fall flat. Here are two sentences, one that tells and one that shows. Which do you prefer?

1. I looked back and was terrified.
2. I looked back and saw a gigantic black bull galloping toward me, and for a moment I was petrified with terror.

Most people prefer sentence 2, as readers are attracted to a sentence that *shows* action, one that places them in the specific situation. When we *tell*, as in sentence 1, the reader must take our word for it; we tell the audience what to believe. When we *show*, however, we give readers enough details that they can decide how to respond; in sentence 2, readers can *see*, not just hear, that the writer was frightened stiff. Showing is a powerful way to improve a story, though it often takes more words. Good writers mix telling and showing, choosing which moments to sum up and which to spend time with.

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HINT

You can *show* with specific words, sensory details, a person's actions, and dialogue.

ACTIVITY 22.3 *Telling and Showing*

The following sentences tell a reader what to see in a story. Write a sentence that shows the same statement.

EXAMPLE:

Telling: By the tone of Jeff's voice, I could tell he was in trouble.

Showing: *Dripping blood from his wrist, Jeff shrieked, "Help me, Shane! The sander exploded!"*

1. **Telling:** Surely, Consuela was a happy bride.

   Showing: _____

2. **Telling:** Driving in the winning run, Brian crossed home plate as his team showed their appreciation.

   Showing: _____

3. **Telling:** When Sed threw a lit string of firecrackers onto the deck, his friends reacted quickly.

   Showing: _____

4. **Telling:** Katie had to be the messiest 10-month-old baby ever to eat a bowl of peas.

   Showing: _____

English Review Note

Practice changing from direct to indirect speech. How does switching affect the word order, pronouns, and tenses?

Using Effective Dialogue

Most stories use dialogue because readers are interested in hearing what characters have to say. Dialogue helps us get to know the writer and his or her characters. In your personal narrative you can use three types of "speech":

- **Direct dialogue** uses quotation marks and reproduces what a person has said word for word.
- **Indirect dialogue** does not use quotation marks but reports or summarizes what someone has said.
- **Revealed thought** often uses quotation marks to show what a person is thinking in the midst of action.

In example 1, notice both direct and indirect dialogue:

INDIRECT DIALOGUE

1. It was a hot summer day in the backwoods of Mississippi. My cousin Tommy and I asked my Uncle Jim if he wanted to ride down to the creek on the four-wheelers.

DIRECT DIALOGUE

Uncle Jim looked doubtful, saying, "I don't know. You boys have a crazy streak. Your parents would kick my butt if anything happened to you."

In example 2, notice how the author reveals his thought:

2. I began to thrash my arms in panic, thinking, "I'm going to die!"

ACTIVITY 22.4 *Using Effective Dialogue*

Type or write a paragraph that imagines what the people in this picture might have said to each other during this happy moment at high school graduation. Call the father "Erik," the mother "Elizabeth," and the daughter "Jasmine." Try to include all three forms of speech acts: direct and indirect dialogue and revealed thought.



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Using Space and Time Transitions

As we learned in Chapter 19, linking sentences with connectors—such as repeated words, synonyms, and transitions—is essential if readers are to follow the flow of your ideas. Narratives especially benefit from **space** and **time** transitions like the following:

English Review Note

Review these charts to master transitions involving space and time.

SPACE TRANSITIONS

above	at	in	on	to
across	below	into	over	toward
around	by	near	there	under

TIME TRANSITIONS

after	now	then	references to clock and calendar time: 1:00, last week, etc.
first (second, etc.)	often	until	
next	once	when	

HINT

For a more complete list of transitions, see pp. 288–289.

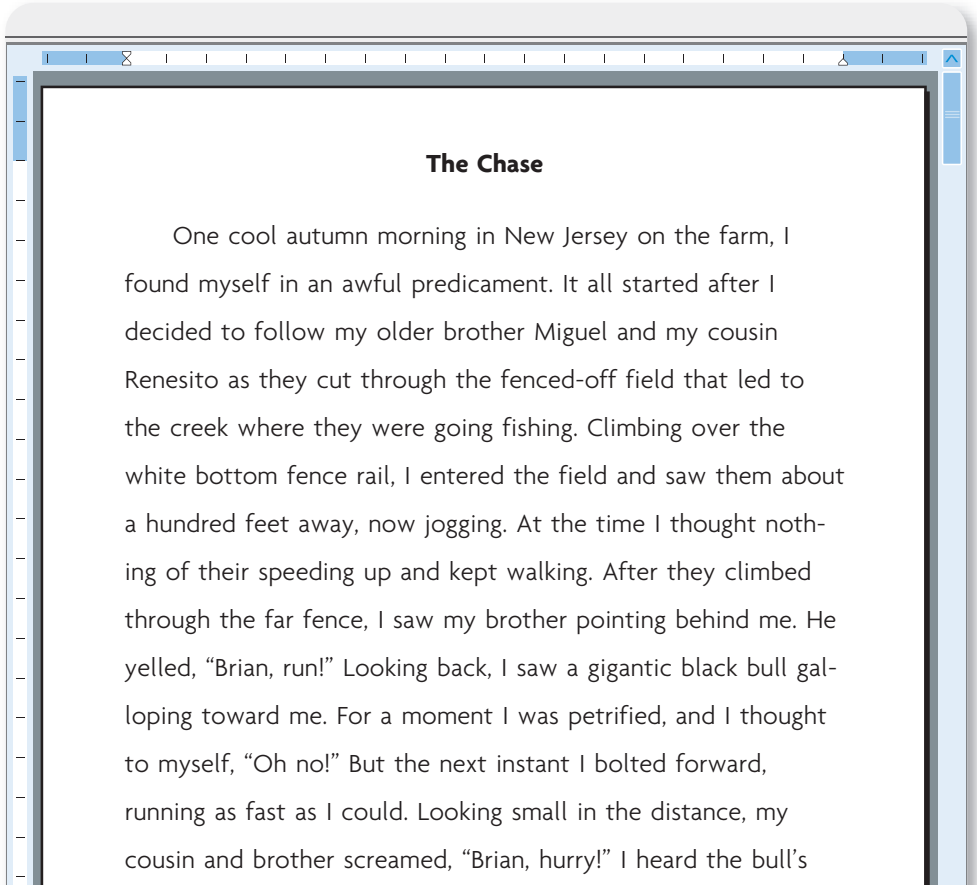
ACTIVITY 22.5 *Using Space and Time Transitions*

Fill in the blanks with the time and space transitions from the preceding lists.

1. Listening _____ the door, Becky fell _____ the room when her sister opened the door.
2. _____ we reached the hospital, no one could find the emergency room.
3. _____, we headed upstream to the huge waterfall.
4. I was following them, so they cut _____ the field.
5. A crowd had gathered _____ the Red Cross van.
6. It was _____ morning, and I was falling asleep.
7. My dad parked _____ to a police car.
8. My mom asked me to wait in the lobby _____ she could find the tickets.

Learning from a Student Model: A Narrative Paragraph

Read the following student model closely, noticing the elements of vivid story telling that you practiced in the skills section. Focus on **conflict, suspense,** and **climax; significance; showing** and **telling; dialogue;** and **space and time transitions**.



The Chase

One cool autumn morning in New Jersey on the farm, I found myself in an awful predicament. It all started after I decided to follow my older brother Miguel and my cousin Renesito as they cut through the fenced-off field that led to the creek where they were going fishing. Climbing over the white bottom fence rail, I entered the field and saw them about a hundred feet away, now jogging. At the time I thought nothing of their speeding up and kept walking. After they climbed through the far fence, I saw my brother pointing behind me. He yelled, "Brian, run!" Looking back, I saw a gigantic black bull galloping toward me. For a moment I was petrified, and I thought to myself, "Oh no!" But the next instant I bolted forward, running as fast as I could. Looking small in the distance, my cousin and brother screamed, "Brian, hurry!" I heard the bull's

hooves hitting the ground faster. "He wants to get me!" I thought. Nearing the fence, I saw Miguel's face, pale with fear and amazement. The bull was right behind me now. I felt the moisture of his breath as I dove through the white fence rails, but the bull couldn't stop. He smacked into one of the posts with a sickening thud and keeled over in the grass in agony. My cousin and brother looked at me, dumbfounded. Then Miguel broke the silence with a roar of laughter, which made Renesito and me laugh too. I had other close calls on the farm, but none like that, and to this day I won't go near a pasture with a bull in it!

—Brian Rodriguez

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THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?

   _____

2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?

   _____

3. What point does Brian make in his last sentence?

   _____

4. Create an action outline that lists eight major actions of the characters.

   _____

5. List three active verbs (Chapter 3) and three *-ing* (Chapter 5) words the author uses to show action.

   _____

6. List an example of telling and one of showing (p. 325).

   _____

7. How does the dialogue add to the story?

   _____

8. Name three specific words (p. 309), and tell how they add to the story.

   _____

9. List at least three time and three space transitions (p. 327).

   _____

10. What three details or specific words could you add to make the setting more vivid?

    _____



For an action outline, see Activity 22.1. For more on telling and showing, see Activity 22.3.



Conclude your narrative with a point that shows its significance or meaning.

Writing a Narrative Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a single paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that shows and tells a story about a brief but memorable moment in your life. Begin with a topic sentence that tells your reader what the story is about, move straight into the action, build toward a climax, and finish with a sentence that makes some point.

Audience and Purpose

Choose an audience that would be interested in reading your story. Remember that you may have to explain a situation more thoroughly or define particular words depending on who reads your work. For example, the author of "Close Call" (p. 323) assumed his reader would know what *ATV* stands for, so he did not spell out *all-terrain vehicle*.

In a narrative, your purpose may be to inform, persuade, or entertain your reader. Regardless, be sure to make the significance of your story clear.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Narration

Finding a good story topic is not always easy, even though (or maybe because!) we have lived through hundreds of memorable moments. To help focus your search, consider that you should care about your topic, remember it well, and be able to fit it into a paragraph. Often, strong single-paragraph stories (like both of this chapter's student models) span only a few minutes' time. The following topic list may give you a few helpful ideas:

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR NARRATION

1. A special experience in a group: sports team, band, club, Boy/Girl Scouts, fraternal organizations (Kiwanis, Rotary, Elks), military, PTA
2. A moment when you realized something important about yourself, positive or negative: you are supportive, well-organized, industrious, cruel, selfish, lazy
3. An experience with altering your appearance: tattooing, piercing, hair coloring, cosmetic surgery, weight loss, body building
4. An embarrassing moment: speaking in public, asking for a date, being caught in a lie, getting a speeding ticket
5. A life-threatening accident
6. A time when another person badly frightened you
7. A moment when you lost control of your anger and harmed yourself or others
8. A time when you experienced great pain: childbirth, broken bone, burn, migraine headache, heart attack
9. A moment of triumph: graduating, making a touchdown, making it onto a sports team or into a musical group
10. A particularly pleasant or unpleasant moment at your job
11. A major life change: switching jobs, schools, homes, countries
12. A moment when you were especially happy or depressed
13. A moment when you lost someone close
14. A moment of special celebration: birthday, bat or bar mitzvah, wedding, family reunion, Mother's Day

TELL A STORY ABOUT THE NATURAL WORLD

To hear a range of interesting stories (and get inspiration for your own), list "Nature Stories" audio podcasts from the Nature Conservancy. Consider telling a story about a moment when you felt connected to the natural world or separated from it. You will find these podcasts at http://support.nature.org/site/PageServer?pagename=podcast. ●



After you have chosen a story to tell, you can use several prewriting methods, such as clustering and listing. For narratives, the journalist's questions can be especially useful, as in the following example for the student model "The Chase" (p. 328):



See Chapter 1 for more on prewriting methods, including the journalist's questions.

Who: Brian, his cousin Renesito, and his brother Miguel were involved.

What: Brian was almost trampled by a bull.

When: It was an autumn morning, back when Brian was a child.

Where: It happened on the farm in New Jersey.

Why: Brian wanted to follow his brother and cousin and was not being careful.

How: He followed his brother and cousin into a pasture with a bull.

What was the result: The boys were deeply frightened, but Brian escaped unharmed.

As you prewrite, focusing on these points will help give you good material for your story:

- **Setting:** Give your reader enough details to see the story happening.
- **Characters** (people)**:** Give enough details about the characters so that the reader can place them in the story.
- **Dialogue:** Use dialogue unless there is a good reason not to.
- **Action:** Show yourself and others doing something.
- **Thoughts and feelings:** Tell and/or show some of both.
- **Significance:** A story with a point is both memorable and meaningful. Reward your reader at the end.

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JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 22.2

Review your prewriting notes. Does your story have a point yet? Does the story reveal something about you or another? In one or two sentences, explain the meaning of your story.

FEEDBACK *When you have a good start on your prewriting and have thought your story through, find a friend or classmate and tell your story to him or her. Your reader may help you decide to change your focus, add or cut material, or just keep moving ahead.*

Organizing Narrative Paragraphs

After you have gathered your ideas and arranged them in chronological (time) order, write a topic sentence that tells what the story will be about. Here you can hint at the conflict without giving away the climax, as Brian Rodriguez does in his topic sentence for "The Chase." Next, move right into the action of your story. Resist giving several sentences of background explanation. Remember that you are writing only a paragraph, so you must use space carefully. Also, be sure to limit the time your story covers and keep the action in only one or two scenes. Don't skip from place to place.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 22.3

To help focus your draft, try an action outline (as in Activity 22.1) that lists the major actions of your event as they occurred. Limit your main actions to around eight to ten.

Drafting Narrative Paragraphs

As you move into your drafting, keep the following points in mind:

1. To make the story seem more immediate, close your eyes in a quiet place, and try to visualize what happened. Think of specific things and people, sensory details, actions, and dialogue. Try to see the story as a movie.
2. Use your "creative memory" to fill in gaps in your story. Use details that could have been part of the scene and dialogue that could have been spoken.
3. Summarize the action to move readers quickly through some parts of your story.
4. Describe a scene in detail when you want the reader to slow down and pay attention, especially near the climax.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 22.4

After finishing your first rough draft, reread it, and tell why your story is interesting. Where do you build suspense? Does the action reach a climax near the end? Do you wrap up the story soon after the climax? If you're using a blog, post the draft of your story for feedback.

FEEDBACK *Read one or two of your classmates' rough drafts, and offer feedback on each story's use of suspense and its climax. To you, what seems like each story's meaning or significance?*



Revising Narrative Paragraphs

As you begin revising the first draft of your narrative, use the following checklist as a guide:

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING NARRATIVE PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Does your story start fairly near the climax so that you can tell it in around 200 to 250 words?
- ☐ Does your topic sentence tell what the story is about, hinting at the conflict or main point?
- ☐ Have you included conflict, suspense, and action that lead to a climax and make a point?
- ☐ Have you included details of the setting and people and given the characters some dialogue?
- ☐ As your story unfolds, does it tell and/or show your reader what you think and feel?
- ☐ Have you used sufficient time and space transitions and other connectors?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence reflect on the event and its meaning?



For detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.



See pp. 288–289 for more on connectors.

Alternate Assignments

Here are several narrative writing options that might interest you. For any of these assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Create a narrative that has conflict and suspense.
- Choose a story with clear significance.
- Build a story that shows as well as tells.
- Use effective dialogue.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Narration

1. **Write a story for a child.** Your story can be real (nonfiction) or imagined (fiction). Decide on an age group (3–5, 6–9, 10–12), and write with those readers in mind. Let's say you're writing a story about getting your ears pierced for an 8-year-old girl who wants to wear earrings: you would be careful to use words and dialogue that a young reader would understand. Also, you might assume that your reader is concerned about how painful ear piercing is (with her own ears in mind) and address this detail in a reassuring or cautionary way.

   If you write a fictional story, you could use it to explain something or just to entertain. For example, you could tell how a playground bully was finally stopped when a child stood up to him. Or you could write a fantasy about good fairies that guide lost pets back home.

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Be sure to begin with a topic sentence that tells what the story is about and end with a sentence that reveals the story's point.

2. **Write a story from an animal's point of view.** For example, horses are ridden by people who may be kind but still control their lives and are heavy to carry! Show and/or tell how a horse feels about this. Or become your own dog or cat, and narrate a story from that animal's perspective. Maybe your toy poodle believes she is the ferocious defender of your house and that without her, your family would be lost. If you have seen or read *The Golden Compass*, you might tell part of one of the humans' stories through the eyes of one of their "daemons."
3. **Use the accompanying picture to help you write a story**. You can approach this assignment in several ways. For instance, you could retell the tortoise and hare fable or, as movies like *Hoodwinked* have done, give the story your own twist. Maybe the rabbit wins this time; or maybe he still loses, but we find out that he didn't fall asleep: perhaps he was off saving another animal that needed help. Or you might tell the story of the people who put these animals in the picture. What were they thinking? What did they hope to accomplish with this image?





ACTIVITY 22.6 WORKING ONLINE: *Telling Great Stories*

Listen to a free podcast of the latest *This American Life* episode at http://www.thislife.org/Radio_Podcast.aspx. Is the story interesting, and if so, why? Write a paragraph about an event in your life that you think radio or podcast listeners would find interesting. If you want to write and share more stories, consider creating an online story portfolio on Writing.com (http://www.writing.com/?rfrc=stories.com&rfrt=www), a site for beginning and experienced writers.



ACTIVITY 22.7 WORKING ONLINE: *Narration Review*

At www.mhhe.com/brannan, take the Chapter 22 Review Quiz to test your understanding of narrative-writing skills.

Linking to Future Experience



A good story is useful in all types of college and workplace writing. Storytelling is a great way to ground your readers in specific situations and gain their interest and trust. Narratives are commonly used in the introductions of papers or speeches. Political candidates know that if they first tell you the story of Paula, a 19-year-old Iowan who was denied health care coverage for leukemia because it was a preexisting condition, you will be more willing to listen when they say, "The current health care system needs to be revamped." And in the business world, every product has a "story." Watching commercials, you'll notice that some tales are taller than others. The story that an iPod is easy to use and transport is both compelling and true; but does ordering KFC make your family happier by freeing up food-preparation time? In an academic context, be careful that your stories aren't misleading.

Chapter Summary

1. A narrative tells (and shows) about events and usually about people.
2. Narratives involve conflict and suspense. They are arranged chronologically, lead to a climax, and have a point.
3. The setting is the backdrop for a story's action.
4. Narratives reveal a character's thoughts and feelings and usually use dialogue.
5. Well-organized narrative paragraphs require topic and concluding sentences.
6. Time and space transitions and other connectors are essential in storytelling.
7. Both showing and telling are used to develop stories.
8. Specific words and sensory details are important for scene building.
9. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

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Writing with Examples (Illustration) 23

[*What are some examples of outdoor activities or sports that you enjoy? If you prefer indoor activities, list examples of these instead.*]



KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in using examples
  - Introducing examples with subtopic sentences
  - Arranging examples by order of importance
  - Linking subtopic sentences
  - Developing examples
- Learning from a student model
- Writing an illustration paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

If a friend told you that he or she likes exciting water sports, ones with an edge of danger, what image comes to mind? The picture on page 336 shows us one possibility, white-water rafting, but there are many other **examples** of "exciting water sports"—waterskiing, wakeboarding, surfing, windsurfing, kite surfing, scuba diving, and cliff diving. Whenever you use a specific example to show what you mean, you are **illustrating**, and therefore strengthening, your point. This chapter focuses on using examples effectively in your writing.

As you practice illustrating, you will keep describing (building images with specific words and sensory details) and narrating (making a point with brief stories). However, in this paragraph assignment, instead of focusing on *one* place or story, you will choose *several* examples to show what you mean. Also, you will learn to begin each example with a **subtopic sentence** (see p. 338).



For more on describing, see Chapter 21. For more on narrating, see Chapter 22.

Linking to Previous Experience



What You Already Know about Using Examples

Using examples is the most common way we have of telling others what we mean. While we sometimes resort to general statements, much more often we need to be specific. When you flop down on the couch at home, exhausted, and say, "I'm beat," you may feel you've said it all. But if you are looking for sympathy, you will probably add specific examples, like "Angelina never showed, so I had to work two stations during the lunch rush!" You have been giving people specific examples all your life. In this chapter, you will get even better at it.

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JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 23.1

List three recent situations when you have used examples to explain, defend a position, and/or entertain. You may have given examples to explain what you like about a significant other, to defend a decision, or to entertain with tales of a quirky coworker. In each case, how many details did you offer? Did you achieve your purpose? In several sentences, write out the examples and details you used.

FEEDBACK *Share your examples. Compliment a group member on an example or detail you find particularly interesting in his or her work; then give at least two reasons you like it.*



Developing Skills in Using Examples

The following skills will help you use examples more effectively:

1. Introducing examples with subtopic sentences
2. Arranging examples by order of importance
3. Linking subtopic sentences with transitions and other connectors
4. Developing examples with specific words, details, and explanations

Introducing Examples with Subtopic Sentences

A **subtopic sentence** tells about each major example in a paragraph just as the topic sentence tells about the whole paragraph. Therefore, the subtopic sentence should name its example and make a statement about it. In addition, since subtopic sentences are *within* a paragraph, they should contain a transitional word or other connector.

You can see how subtopic sentences work in the paragraph outline below. The examples are underlined once, the statements being made about the examples are underlined twice, and the transitional words are shaded.

Topic sentence: As a child in my bedroom at night, I was often terrified.

Subtopic sentences (introducing each main example):

1. One fear was of the Dust Ball Monster, whom I knew lived under my bed.
2. Another creature who frightened me was the Shoe Bug.
3. However, what scared me most of all was the Green Gremlin, who lived in the oak tree by my window.

After you have decided on your main examples and written them out in subtopic sentences, you then continue your paragraph by telling more about each example. For instance, the writer could add these sentences to subtopic sentence 1 from above:

> One fear was of the Dust Ball Monster, who I knew lived under my bed. This monster was covered with gray scales and dust balls and had long, skinny arms with yellow claws. It would grab me and pull me under the bed if I wasn't careful, so I always jumped out of bed and ran for the door.

ACTIVITY 23.1 *Recognizing Subtopic Sentences*

In this illustration paragraph, locate the three subtopic sentences; then underline each of the main examples once and the statement about each example twice. For help, refer to the example above about childhood night fears.

The Sharks of Steel

Submarines perform many useful tasks for civilians and the military. First of all, these ships help in rescue missions at sea. If a merchant ship develops a problem while away from land, a submarine might help with fighting fires, giving medical aid, or carrying the crew to safety. Next, submarines help with scientific research. For instance, they travel under the Arctic and Antarctic to study the ice pack to help scientists find out more about global warming. However, the most important use of submarines is in national security. Submarines travel with carrier battle groups all over the world to protect the Navy from hostile ships. Also, many submarines carry nuclear missiles, which

may deter foreign powers from attacking our country. Even though the American submarine fleet has been reduced by two-thirds in the past 20 years, it still provides these valuable services to our country.

—*Mikel King*

Arranging Examples by Order of Importance

Examples can be arranged in several ways, but one effective method is **order of importance**. In this arrangement writers decide which of their examples are more important to them and/or their audience and then organize from lesser to greater importance, saving the most important or dramatic example for last. People tend to pay the most attention to the last point they read.

ACTIVITY 23.2 *Arranging Examples by Importance*

The following sets of examples are out of order. Rearrange them from least (1) to most (4) important by numbering them in the spaces provided.

1. **Topic sentence:** My blind dating experiences have been some of the worst in my life.

   ___ Even worse than dinner with Sheila was lunch with Jenny, the clone of my mother!

   ___ One recent bad date was with Sheila, a vegetarian I cooked steak for.

   ___ The worst of them all was Medusa, the snake woman.

   ___ Another lapse in judgment was agreeing to meet Roxanne, my brother's boss, who has breath that smells like roadkill.

2. **Topic sentence:** I still can't believe that I survived my dangerous childhood.

   ___ My nearest brush with death, however, came when sledding in Park City, Utah.

   ___ Once again I almost died when I tried to parachute from our roof with a blanket.

   ___ Worse than my near-electrocution was the time I broke my arm on roller blades.

   ___ My first dangerous experience was putting mom's car keys into a wall outlet.

3. **Topic sentence:** My dog, Perry, is a disaster around the house.

   ___ In addition to being hyperactive, Perry damages everything in sight.

   ___ One bad habit is his hyperactivity.

   ___ But the most obnoxious fact of all is that Perry is still not housebroken.

   ___ Further, this animal drives us all crazy with his continuous barking.

Linking Subtopic Sentence with Transitions and Other Connectors

Linking sentences within and between paragraphs helps readers follow our ideas more easily. We can make these connections in several ways: transitions, repetition, synonyms, and pronouns.

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For more on connectors, see Chapter 19.

Notice the shaded transitions in the following examples. Also, the writer has used a synonym for *monster*—the word *creature*—in the second subtopic. We see the order-of-importance arrangement with the word *most* in subtopic 3.

1. One fear was of the Dust Ball Monster, whom I knew lived under my bed.
2. Another creature who frightened me was the Shoe Bug.
3. However, what scared me most of all was the Green Gremlin, who lived in the oak tree by my window.

As you write your own subtopic and concluding sentences, be sure to use solid connectors like the ones in the following lists:

TRANSITIONS FOR ADDING MATERIAL

again	besides	furthermore	moreover
also	best	in addition	next
and	first	last	one
as well as	further	likewise	worst

TRANSITIONS FOR GIVING EXAMPLES AND EMPHASIS

above all	especially	in particular	one reason
after all	for example	in truth	surely
another	for instance	most important	that is
certainly	in fact	of course	to illustrate

ACTIVITY 23.3 *Linking Sentences*

Rewrite each subtopic sentence in the two paragraph outlines that follow so that the sentence clearly connects with the example that precedes it. Use any of the transitional words in the preceding lists and/or any other connectors that work (repeat words, synonyms, or pronouns.) Circle all connectors and indicate order of importance. The first subtopic sentence is rewritten as an example.

1. **Topic sentence:** Air travel is, for the most part, safe and convenient, but there are several disadvantages to flying.

   Subtopic sentence 1: Weather delays can be a problem.

   EXAMPLE:

   Rewritten with connector: The first disadvantage is weather delays.

Subtopic sentence 2: It can take a long time just to get on the plane.

Rewritten with connector: _____

_____

Subtopic sentence 3: A person is trapped in a small space for hours.

Rewritten with connector: _____

_____

2. **Topic sentence:** I love my cat, BW, but he gets into a lot of mischief.

Subtopic sentence 1: BW likes to raid the trash.

Rewritten with connector: _____

_____

Subtopic sentence 2: He attacks people for no reason.

Rewritten with connector: _____

_____

Subtopic sentence 3: BW wakes me at 5:00 every morning!

Rewritten with connector: _____

_____

Developing Examples

As we discussed in Chapter 19, writers develop their points through detailed examples and explanations. Below, compare two different ways—A and B—to develop the first example in a paragraph that explains why the author loves Halloween. Which version do you find more interesting?

Topic sentence: When I was a child, I loved Halloween because of the costumes, candy, and staying up late.

Subtopic sentence 1: The first reason I looked forward to this holiday was that everyone got to dress up in cool costumes.

A. Kids wore all kinds of costumes. My favorite was of this creepy guy from a slasher movie. I wore a mask and a hat to look like him. It was fun scaring my sister and the kids in the neighborhood.

B. I liked seeing all the goblins, devils, ghosts, skeletons, and pirates at the school party and on the streets at night. But I also liked being in costume. At various ages I was a ghost, a devil, and a skeleton; I was Superman one year and Batman the next. But my favorite costume was of Freddy Krueger. I wore my black hat down low so people couldn't see at first that I was wearing a rubber mask that faked the melted skin on Freddy's face. I had plastic claws that looked like knives, at least to me. It was fun hearing my sister scream when I jumped out of her bedroom closet. I also enjoyed scaring the little kids while out trick-or-treating.

If you like B more, notice that A is not well developed, whereas B adds specific words, details, action, and more complete explanations, for example, how and why the author wore his Freddy Krueger costume. To involve your reader (and keep yourself interested), develop your examples as in B.

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HINT

If you are not familiar with Halloween, choose a holiday celebration that you enjoy, give two examples why, and then develop those examples.

ACTIVITY 23.4 WORKING ONLINE: *Developing Examples*

With group members, look at the accompanying photograph, and see if it helps bring back memories of your own Halloween fun. Now, develop each of the two subtopic examples below as the preceding example B, was developed. Use specific words, details, action description, and explanation; also, tell your reader your thoughts and emotions.

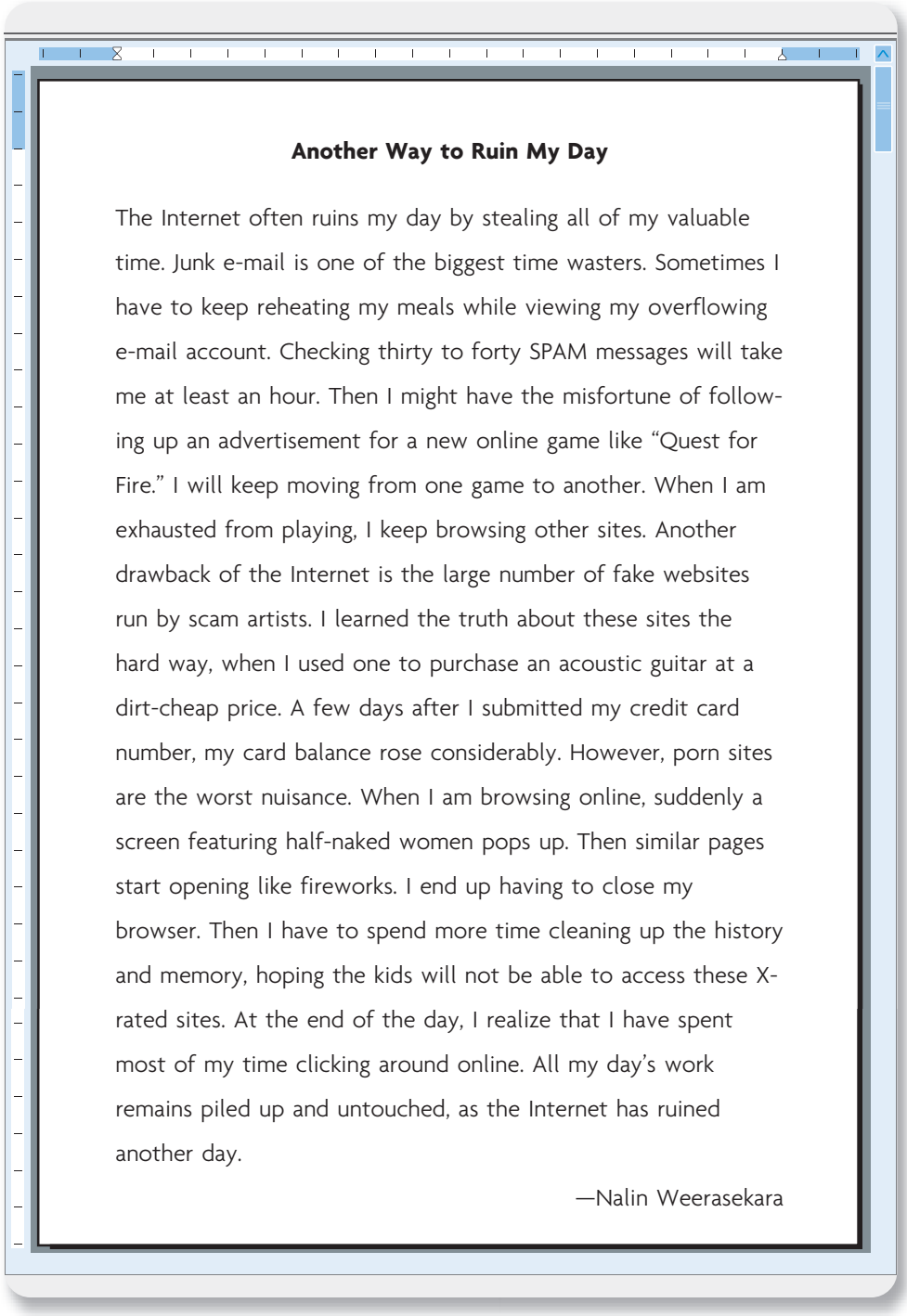
1. **Subtopic sentence 2:** Besides the costumes, I loved filling my bags with candy.



2. **Subtopic sentence 3:** But the best part of Halloween for me was the adventure of staying out late at night.

Learning from a Student Model: An Illustration Paragraph

Read the following student model closely, noticing in particular the elements of strong illustration that you practiced in the skills section. Focus on **subtopic sentences**, arrangement by **order of importance**, **linking sentences**, and **developing** examples through **specific words**, **details**, and **explanations**.



Another Way to Ruin My Day

The Internet often ruins my day by stealing all of my valuable time. Junk e-mail is one of the biggest time wasters. Sometimes I have to keep reheating my meals while viewing my overflowing e-mail account. Checking thirty to forty SPAM messages will take me at least an hour. Then I might have the misfortune of following up an advertisement for a new online game like "Quest for Fire." I will keep moving from one game to another. When I am exhausted from playing, I keep browsing other sites. Another drawback of the Internet is the large number of fake websites run by scam artists. I learned the truth about these sites the hard way, when I used one to purchase an acoustic guitar at a dirt-cheap price. A few days after I submitted my credit card number, my card balance rose considerably. However, porn sites are the worst nuisance. When I am browsing online, suddenly a screen featuring half-naked women pops up. Then similar pages start opening like fireworks. I end up having to close my browser. Then I have to spend more time cleaning up the history and memory, hoping the kids will not be able to access these X-rated sites. At the end of the day, I realize that I have spent most of my time clicking around online. All my day's work remains piled up and untouched, as the Internet has ruined another day.

—Nalin Weerasekara

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THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What point does Nalin make in his last sentence?
4. Copy each of the subtopic sentences, and underline the main example once and the statement about it twice. Circle the connectors: transitions, repeat words, synonyms, and pronouns.
5. What word shows that the main examples are arranged by importance?
6. Choose one of the three subtopics, and tell how Nalin's explaining helps you better understand his point.
7. Choose a subtopic, and tell how several specific words add to Nalin's meaning.
8. Name three ways to further develop any subtopic in this paragraph. Consider action, active verbs, dialogue, specific words, sensory details, describing a person or setting, revealing thoughts and emotions, and further explanation.



For more on connectors, see Chapter 19.

Writing an Illustration Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that develops a topic by using three to four main examples. Be sure to begin each main example with a subtopic sentence.



For more on describing an audience, see Chapter 1.

Audience and Purpose

Think about who (besides you) would be interested in your topic. In "Another Way to Ruin My Day," Nalin assumes that his audience uses the Internet and may have also spent too much time online managing e-mail, playing games, or surfing, so he does not spend time explaining these activities. Likewise, in paragraph B under "Developing Examples" (p. 341), the writer assumes that readers are familiar with Halloween and with Freddy Krueger from the *Nightmare on Elm Street* horror movies, so he does not need to describe the holiday or character in much detail; he does, however, describe his costume using specific examples. This way, readers can picture how he looked dressed as Freddy.

Your purpose may be to inform, persuade, or entertain your reader, but be sure to make some overall point that your examples support.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Illustrative Paragraphs

For this assignment, you may want to write from personal experience (as in "Another Way to Ruin My Day," p. 343). Instead, you may pick a topic that you haven't personally been involved with but know something about (as in "The Sharks of Steel" on p. 338). The following topic list may give you a few helpful ideas:

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR ILLUSTRATION

Focus more on personal experience

1. Forces of nature that have frightened or inspired you (storms, fires, tornadoes, etc.)
2. Childhood or adult fears, delights, or fantasies
3. Stages of your life
4. A hobby, sport, talent, game, or activity that you enjoy
5. Blogs that you enjoy reading and/or commenting on
6. Rules at home, work, or school that you hate (or hated) to obey
7. Best friends or worst enemies
8. Competition with a brother, sister, friend, or rival
9. Favorite (or least favorite) places to shop
10. Favorite (or least favorite) restaurants

Focus more on general knowledge

1. Types of renewable energy sources
2. Characteristics of a great athlete or game (skateboarder, football, soccer, etc.)
3. Healthy (or unhealthy) food
4. Effective (or ineffective) ways to ask someone out
5. Qualities of a good (or bad) parent, coach, teacher, boss, or other leader
6. Advantages or limitations of social networking sites (such as Facebook)
7. Best (or worst) reality TV shows
8. Best (or worst) ads on TV, online, or in print
9. Best (or worst) sports cars, economy cars, hybrids, trucks, or other vehicle
10. Advantages to various types of transportation: car, plane, boat, train



Other possible topics include:

—Famous places to visit in your native country

—Problems you encountered learning English

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USE EXAMPLES OF CONSERVATION



Write your paragraph about one of the following topics:

1. What are some specific ways that you show environmental awareness (or wish you did)?
2. What are specific ways in which your campus shows a commitment to conservation? •

Choose several possible topics, and then make a limiting statement about each. Next, use a prewriting method (such as listing or clustering) to discover at least three examples for each.

In "Another Way to Ruin My Day" (p. 343), Nalin first limited his topic (ways his time gets wasted) by focusing on the Internet's role in this problem. Next, he listed several main examples, which he cut to the following three:

1. Junk e-mail
2. Fake websites (scams)
3. Pornographic websites

Which of your topics yields the best, most interesting examples? Go forward with that one.

To develop each of his examples, Nalin asked himself, "What do I mean by each of these illustrations?" and "How can I make them clearer to my reader?" To explain to readers how junk mail wasted his time, Nalin provided another layer of examples, using specific details:

1. I let my meals get cold while I sit glued to the computer monitor.
2. Checking thirty to forty e-mails each day takes me at least an hour.
3. I begin playing online games.
4. I also waste time browsing.

When you prewrite for your main examples, try to uncover several layers of more specific examples to help your reader see what you mean.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 23.2

Select a topic for your paragraph, and follow the prewriting model above. Begin by listing four or five main examples that you could include; then cut the least promising examples, keeping only three or four. Include several specific examples with details to show your reader what you mean by each of your main examples.



FEEDBACK *Trade examples with a classmate. Point out your favorite specific example in his or her paragraph, and ask at least one constructive question. What feedback did you receive?*

Organizing Illustrative Paragraphs

With your first round of prewriting completed, you can arrange your three to four main examples from **least to most** important. If you have not yet written out a topic sentence, now is a good time to do so. Aside from telling what your topic is and limiting it with a statement, your topic sentence will begin your "I" or "they" approach to the subject. Notice both ways of writing a topic sentence below:

1. **"I" method:** The Internet all too often ruins my day by stealing all of my valuable time.
2. **"They" method:** The Internet all too often ruins people's day by stealing all of their valuable time.

HINT

The "I" approach relies on personal examples and experiences; the "they" approach uses more general knowledge.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 23.3

Write out or type your working topic sentence, underlining the topic once and the limiting statement twice. Now list your three or four main examples. Do these examples fall into a clear order of importance? Why do you think that your last example is the most interesting or dramatic?

FEEDBACK *Respond to a classmate's list of examples. Is it arranged from least to most important? Does the last example seem most important to you? Why or why not?*



Drafting Illustration Paragraphs

Moving into your first draft, keep the following points in mind:

1. For a quick start, write out your topic sentence followed *directly* by your first subtopic sentence. Then write out your other subtopic sentences at spaced intervals on the page. Don't worry about polishing these sentences yet. You may find that it helps to begin writing your last example first since it is the most important one to you.
2. Remember to keep asking the question "What do I mean by what I have just written?" Develop your subtopic examples with even more specific, detailed examples and explanation.
3. Keep in mind that your examples do not have to be evenly balanced, though they should all be developed. Your first example may need only a sentence or two of explanation, while your last example may be a bit longer than the others.
4. To replace "I" in papers, use the more-general-knowledge, or "they," approach, trying pronouns like *their, they, them,* and *those* and nouns like *people, women, students, consumers,* and *athletes*.

HINT

Take a few minutes to review the list of transitions and other connectors (see pp. 288–289) before you begin drafting.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 23.4

After finishing your first rough draft, reread it, and highlight with a marker (or your computer's highlight feature) your subtopic sentences. Now underline the topic of each once and the limiting statement twice. Are the subtopics

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arranged by importance? What parts of the draft do you like most and least? Answer in a paragraph.

FEEDBACK *Share this draft with your instructor or select classmates. Write a paragraph about the strengths, weaknesses, and arrangement of subtopics in a classmate's draft.*

Revising Illustration Paragraphs

HINT

For more detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.

As you begin revising the first draft of your illustration paragraph, use the following checklist as a guide:

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING ILLUSTRATION PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Have you used three or four examples, not just a single long one?
- ☐ Does your topic sentence name and limit the topic with a statement?
- ☐ Are your examples arranged by importance (or, if suitable, by time)?
- ☐ Have you included subtopic sentences that name and limit each main example?
- ☐ Are subtopic examples developed with specific words, details, and explanations?
- ☐ Have you used transitions and other connectors, especially in subtopic sentences?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence both rename the topic and make a point?

Alternate Assignments

Here are several additional writing options for illustration paragraphs. With any of the following assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Introduce each major example with a subtopic sentence.
- Arrange major examples by importance (or occasionally, time).
- Use connectors, especially in subtopic sentences.
- Develop examples with specific words, details, and explanations.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Illustration

1. **Tell about your experiences adjusting to another culture**—from another country to the United States or vice versa. Choose three or four differences, list them by importance, and then explain them. For example, many people coming to the United States remark on the amount of consumer goods available (think of Target, malls, and so forth) and how Americans tend to gobble up those goods. Be sure to conclude your paragraph with some point or observation about these cultural differences.

2. **Write an examples paragraph about a person.** You might tell why you like or dislike the person, choosing three or four traits that make you feel that way. For instance, your cousin might be selfish, bossy, and lazy. You would tell and show situations in which your cousin acted in those ways. Or you might tell about just one of a person's traits and discuss three or four times you have seen it. For example, if your sister is a loyal person, you might recall several times when she showed her loyalty.

3. ILLUSTRATE THE GREATEST PROBLEMS HUMANS FACE



Looking at the accompanying picture of the earth and moon, reflect on how small our planet really is in the vastness of space. It is the only place we have. How well are we taking care of it and each other? Choose what you feel are the three greatest problems we face (some possibilities include war, poverty, sickness, famine, slavery, drug trafficking, pollution, species extinction, and global warming), arrange them by order of importance, and explain why you think each is so serious. Include specific examples and details. ●



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ACTIVITY 23.5 WORKING ONLINE: *Backing Up a Statement with Examples*

Take the career-matching quiz at http://www.princetonreview.com/cte/quiz/career_quiz1.asp and see what your top job match is. Does this seem like a likely path for you to follow or not? Write a topic sentence that embraces, rejects, or considers the possibility of pursuing this career. Back your statement up with three specific examples of why it is a good, bad, possible, interesting, or bizarre fit.



WORKING ONLINE ACTIVITY 23.6 *Illustration Review*

Take the Chapter 23 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



Linking to Future Experience



Examples, like descriptions, are used in nearly every piece of good writing in and beyond college. From hard statistics and quotations to case studies and personal observations, they are your evidence; providing them makes your writing more specific and credible. The challenge is to choose the best examples for each purpose and audience—and to articulate them well. For instance, if you were making a case at work for why you should receive a raise, you might mention a few positive contributions you have made to the company, the amount of time you have worked there, and a new skill you have acquired and could put to use; however, you would not want to say you want the raise because you desperately need a Wii or a nicer car.

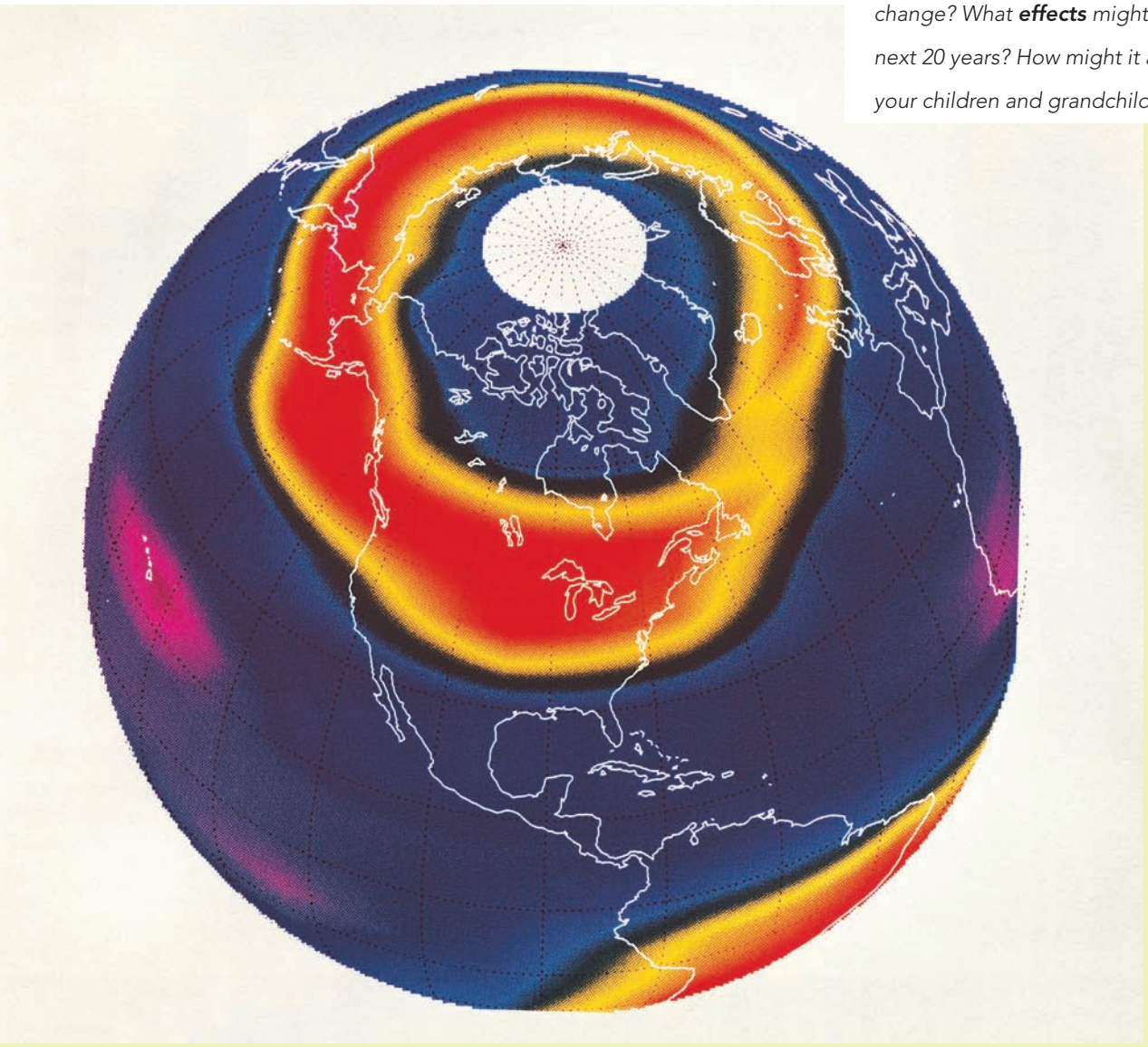
Chapter Summary

1. Most writing uses examples that become increasingly specific, the next example explaining the one that comes before it.
2. Examples can be based on personal experience ("I") or general knowledge ("they").
3. Examples often include elements of description and narration, and explanations may include a person's thoughts and feelings about a situation or idea.
4. Each major example in an illustration paragraph should be introduced with a subtopic sentence.
5. Writing with examples is often organized by order of importance.
6. Transitional words and other connectors are especially important in subtopic sentences.
7. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

Discovering Causes and Effects

24

[*What do you think are the main* ***causes*** *of global climate change? What* ***effects*** *might it have on your life in the next 20 years? How might it affect the world you leave to your children and grandchildren?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in working with causes and effects
  - Exploring causes and effects
  - Developing causes and effects
  - Thinking critically about causes and effects
- Learning from a student model: an effects paragraph
- Writing a causes or effects paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?



Setting the Stage

Most scientists believe that our planet is warming dangerously. Looking at the picture of the Earth on page 351, you can see the bright band of red and orange that spreads across part of North America, a part in which many of us live. Almost everyone agrees that carbon dioxide is the main culprit, trapping heat that would otherwise escape into space. But what causes the increased levels of CO_2? There are many natural sources, such as the decay of vegetation, volcanic eruptions, and forest fires, but there are also many human sources, including the one illustrated in the above photograph.



If global warming is not slowed, what might be the effects: melting glaciers (as shown here), rising oceans, droughts, mega-hurricanes? If these effects occur, what might then result: flooding of coastal cities, failing crops, expanding deserts, leveling of cities by killer winds? When we begin to list the reasons, or **causes**, for an event and then try to predict the results, or **effects**, we are dealing with cause-and-effect reasoning, the focus of this chapter.

Linking to Previous Experience

What You Already Know about Causes and Effects

When we have problems, most of us try to solve them. Can you imagine not trying to figure out why your last check bounced, your significant other is mad at you, or your team lost the big game? We look hard at these situations, and try to understand what caused them so that we can avoid them in the future. Likewise, when we have important decisions to make—should I go to college? should I take this job? do I really want to marry this person?—we look down the road to see the good and the bad sides, the effects, of the decisions. We all have a lot of experience thinking like this—thinking critically. And the better we become at it, the more fulfilling our lives are likely to be.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 24.1

When have you recently used cause/effect thinking to understand a problem or make a decision? For example, maybe you are having problems at work,

school, or home. What is causing the problems; how are they affecting you? Or what important decision have you made recently—enrolling in summer classes, buying a car, breaking off a relationship? Summarize one of these situations, and list several causes for it and effects of it.



FEEDBACK *Read a classmate's entry. Which interests you more: the causes or the effects of the decision? In a sentence or two, tell the writer why.*

Developing Skills in Working with Causes and Effects

The following activities will help you work with causes and effects:

1. Discovering causes and effects
2. Developing causes and effects
3. Thinking critically about causes and effects

Exploring Causes and Effects

Causes and effects are not always obvious; sometimes writers focus their energy on minor points, missing the opportunity to tell a reader about more significant and interesting reasons. To help you uncover the most important causes for an event, consider the following list:

QUESTIONS FOR EXPLORING CAUSES

- **Primary:** What causes would certainly bring about the event?
- **Secondary:** What causes might reasonably bring about the event?
- **Contributing:** What causes might play a role by creating or adding to another cause?
- **Immediate:** What is the cause closest in time that produced the event?
- **Distant:** What causes might be separated from the event by time or space?
- **Hidden:** What causes might not be readily apparent?
- **Minor:** What causes might be involved in a lesser way (and possibly be mistaken for significant ones)?

We could apply these questions to uncover the causes for getting a speeding ticket:

- **Primary:** being stopped doing 100 in a 65 mph zone
- **Secondary:** bringing the officer's attention to the car by weaving in and out of lanes

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- **Contributing:** talking on a cell phone and losing track of the speed
- **Immediate:** being caught on radar
- **Distant:** borrowing a friend's Porsche 911
- **Hidden:** being in a car that handles so well, the driver didn't know she was speeding
- **Minor:** traveling in traffic so light, the driver was encouraged to floor it

Creating a list like this can help you uncover significant causes for an event. However, you must determine which causes are most important to you and would be considered important by your audience. For example, if your main purpose is to discourage people from using cell phones while driving, you would be sure to highlight the contributing cause listed above as a significant cause for being ticketed.



ACTIVITY 24.1 WORKING TOGETHER: *Discovering Causes and Effects*

With group members, discuss the paragraph that follows. Make a list of all the causes for missing the shot. Apply the "Questions for Exploring Causes" on page 353 to explain which of those causes are most important and why.

Missing the Target

Last November, while bow hunting, I had the chance to bag a six-point buck, but I missed two short 15-yard chip shots. The first reason for missing the medium-sized buck was the oak tree I was in. The tree stand was 5 feet below a huge branch, which was in front of me. When the deer came into range, I drew my bow, but the branch was in the way. After a few minutes, the buck moved behind me, presenting my next problem. To aim, I had to lean around the tree. Trying to stay quiet, I managed to get into a position where I could fire. Unfortunately, then he turned away from me. I decided to wait for a better shot. But even when I got one, I had to deal with a 15-mile-an-hour wind blowing in from the east. Shooting to the north, I aimed to the right of where the aim point seemed to be. However, I didn't compensate enough, and my aluminum arrow flew past the whitetail. The buck didn't run off but kept feeding on the grass. When I got a second shot, I struggled with midrange obstructions, and my arrow was deflected by a small twig only a few feet in front of me. Then the buck heard the arrow and ran off, never to be seen again. I realized at that moment that if I had practiced shooting in the wind and around obstacles, I could have brought the Kansas whitetail home.

—*Daniel Hedge*

HINT

You might want to make one person in the group the note-taker.

Developing Causes and Effects

To develop causes or effects for your assignment, you will rely on the methods you have practiced so far this term: specific, detailed examples and clear explanations. For a reminder of how to make your writing more interesting, notice

how the draft below is improved by adding details, specific words, and explanation in the revision:

DRAFT	REVISION
While bow hunting one day, I missed a buck. The first reason for missing was my tree stand, which wasn't positioned the right way. When the deer came into range, I drew my bow, but an obstacle was in the way.	Last November, while bow hunting, I had the chance to bag a six-point buck, but I missed two short 15-yard chip shots. The first reason for missing the medium-sized buck was the oak tree I was in. The tree stand was 5 feet below a huge branch, which was in front of me. When the deer came into range, I drew my bow, but the branch was in the way.

ACTIVITY 24.2 *Developing Causes*

Using the preceding paragraph revision as an example, read through the following excerpt, and then rewrite (or retype) this passage *leaving out* the specific details and explanations that make the writing so interesting. Which details or explanations do you think are especially important—and why? Now list several details that the author did not use but that might make the description even stronger.

> But when I got the better shot, I had to deal with a 15-mile-an-hour wind blowing in from the east. Shooting to the north, I aimed to the right of where the aim point seemed to be. However, I didn't compensate enough, and my aluminum arrow flew past the whitetail. The buck didn't run off but instead kept feeding on the grass. When I got a second shot, I struggled with midrange obstructions, and my arrow was deflected by a small twig only a few feet in front of me.

Thinking Critically about Causes and Effects

It is all too easy to jump to conclusions when facing a problem or anticipating an outcome. But we often make poor judgments when we grab for the first reason or result that comes along. Suppose, for instance, that someone claimed the United States can only solve its energy problems by drilling for oil wherever it is available. This claim could lead to drilling in sensitive wildlife areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or offshore in deep ocean water, where oil spills are more likely. However, perhaps there are other ways to deal with energy concerns, such as funding the development of alternate energy sources, giving tax incentives to car manufacturers to produce more fuel-efficient vehicles, and working with United States citizens to voluntarily reduce their energy consumption. The more closely we examine our logic, asking ourselves, "Why is this claim right?" the more likely we are to arrive at the truth.

ACTIVITY 24.3 *Thinking Critically About Causes and Effects*

Read the following oversimplified statements, and list four other likely causes or effects.

1. Makayla didn't vote in the last presidential election. She must not care about her country.

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Other reasons (causes) for not voting:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

2. Cody's boss fired him today. The boss must not have liked him.

Other reasons (causes) for being fired:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

3. Video gamers lose all contact with the real world.

Other results (effects) of playing video games:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

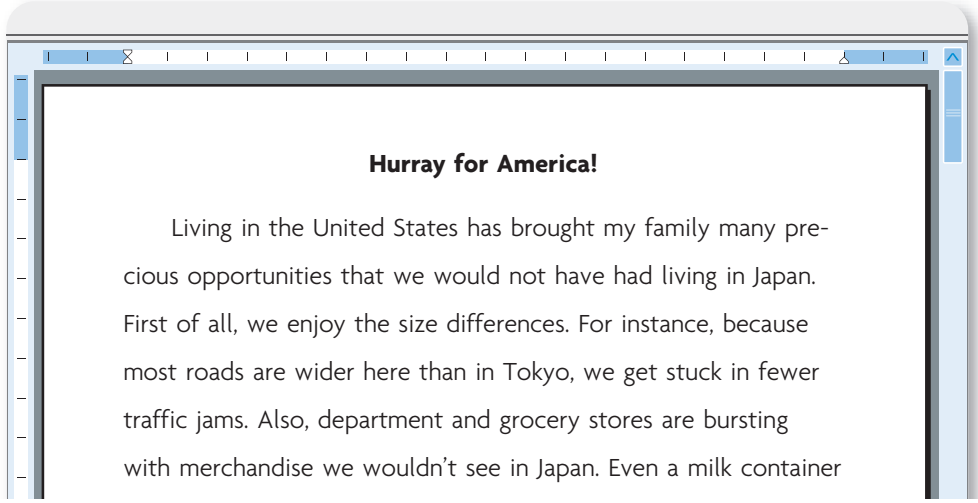
d. _____



For more on subtopic sentences, see Chapter 23, p. 338.

Learning from a Student Model: An Effects Paragraph

Read the following student model closely, noticing in particular the author's clear focus in her **topic sentence**; her well-linked **subtopic sentences**; her arrangement of major effects by **order of importance**; and her **development** of effects through **specific words**, **details**, and **explanations**.



Hurray for America!

Living in the United States has brought my family many precious opportunities that we would not have had living in Japan. First of all, we enjoy the size differences. For instance, because most roads are wider here than in Tokyo, we get stuck in fewer traffic jams. Also, department and grocery stores are bursting with merchandise we wouldn't see in Japan. Even a milk container

here seems huge to me. Above all, because the United States is much bigger than Japan, I can see a variety of landscapes: plains, mountains, and deserts. Another advantage of living here is the continuous exposure to different cultures. The average person living in Japan sees few foreigners. At this American college I see people from all over the world, from Thailand, Nigeria, and Guatemala. My daughters now have Indian, Chinese, and Mexican friends whose customs they learn and with whom they share our culture. Having a diverse group of friends helps me learn about other cultures and think more about my own. However, the most significant advantage of living in the United States is that my daughters are becoming bilingual. Both Minami and Minori have learned English quickly, and now they even correct my pronunciation! Because English skills are so important in international relations, I know they will be a great asset to my daughters' futures. There have been many benefits to our stay in America. Though my daughters struggled at first in their new school, their patience and efforts have helped them overcome challenges, and this success will give them greater confidence as they grow.

—Takako Kurokami

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THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What point does Takako make in her last sentence?
4. Copy each of the subtopic sentences, and underline the main effect (example) once and the statement about it twice. Circle the connectors: transitions, repeat words, synonyms, and pronouns.
5. What word shows that the main effects (examples) are arranged by importance?
6. What effect does the author feel from her experience with diverse cultures in this country? Does showing how one effect might flow from another seem like a logical way to develop an effects paragraph?
7. Choose a subtopic, and tell how several specific words add to Takako's meaning.

8. Name three ways to further develop any subtopic in this paragraph. Consider action, active verbs, dialogue, specific words, sensory details, describing a person or setting, revealing thoughts and emotions, and further explanation.

Writing a Causes or Effects Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that develops a topic by discussing three to four main causes *or* effects (examples). Be sure to begin each main example with a subtopic sentence (see p. 338).

Audience and Purpose



For more on describing an audience, see Chapter 1.

Having a clear sense for who might be reading your work will help you pick and focus a topic. The author of "Missing the Target," (Activity 24.1), was writing primarily for hunters—in particular, archers. They would most likely care about Daniel's difficulties in the hunt and be familiar with terms like "tree stand" and "six-point buck." Of course, the larger audience of non-hunters might also be interested in learning why the deer escaped.

After you have chosen a topic and audience, consider what you want to accomplish with your paragraph: to inform, entertain, or persuade. Now try to communicate your causes or effects clearly, and be sure to make some overall point.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Causes or Effects Paragraphs

Here are some general cause and effect categories to write about, with examples in parentheses:

- **Behaviors** (What causes people to spend so much time on Facebook?)
- **People** (What causes a friend to lose her temper?)
- **Objects** (What effects might the Vietnam War Memorial have on veterans?)
- **Animals** (How do people react when they find mice or even rats in their home?)
- **Events** (What effects did the terrorist acts of 9/11 have on the United States?)

As you skim through the following topic list, remember that you might choose either causes *or* effects to write about. Brainstorming for each will give you a better idea of which will be more interesting to you and your audience. Also, you may choose a more personalized approach to your topic, using the "I" voice (as both student models in this chapter do), or you can use the less-personal "they" voice of general knowledge. For example, you may not spend time on Facebook, but you may have opinions on what motivates others to do so.

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR CAUSES OR EFFECTS PARAGRAPHS

1. Becoming interested in elements of another culture or subculture (manga art and anime, Celtic music/art, Goth dress/music)
2. Joining the military after high school graduation
3. Helping your children daily with their homework
4. Auditioning for a reality TV program

5. Watching a horror film alone at night
6. Regularly speeding on the highway
7. Doing all your homework and attending every class of the term
8. Helping a stranger in need
9. Staying with a job you don't like
10. Returning to college years after high school graduation
11. Eating mostly organically grown foods
12. Spending time in casinos
13. Voting in the 2008 elections
14. Losing a specific amount of weight



Other possible topics:
—Attending college in the U.S.
—Studying English
—Raising your children to be bilingual

When you have chosen a topic, the next step is to explore both causes and effects before deciding which approach to focus on. Prewriting methods (see Chapter 1) can help you with ideas, and listing works particularly well for this assignment. Below are lists of causes and effects for Daniel Hedge's paragraph on missing his target:

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Causes	Effects
1. Cold weather	1. Disappointment
2. Placement of the tree stand	2. Blaming his bow
3. Movement of the buck	3. Pain from hitting the tree in frustration
4. Wind	4. No trophy or meat
5. Branches in the way	5. Friends razzing him
6. Nervousness spoiled aim	6. Considering using a rifle next time
7. Too little practice	7. Resolving to practice more

After thinking through both lists, Daniel decided that he was most interested in telling about the causes for missing his buck.



See p. 347 for more on choosing an "I" or "they" voice.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 24.2

Tell why you chose your topic and focus. What is your purpose, who is your audience, and why would readers be interested in your focus? Will you write with the "I" or "they" voice?



FEEDBACK *In small groups or online, discuss the advantages of using an "I" versus a "they" voice. What effects can each have on a piece of writing?*

Organizing Causes or Effects Paragraphs

Having decided on causes as his focus, Dan next needed to organize his list of causes and decide which he might not need.

1. Wind
2. Too little practice
3. Movement of the buck
4. ~~Cold weather~~
5. Branches in the way
6. ~~Nervousness spoiled aim~~
7. Placement of the tree stand

After deciding that neither nervousness nor the temperature were strong causes, Dan cut them and arranged his remaining causes **chronologically** (as they occurred in time), saving the overall cause—lack of practice—for the expanded thought in his final sentence.

WORKING OUTLINE FOR "MISSING THE TARGET"

1. Placement of tree stand
2. Movement of the buck
3. Wind
4. Branches in the way
5. Too little practice: expanded thought in concluding sentence

HINT

Sometimes a chronological arrangement also happens to be by order of importance.

Your causes or effects may be best arranged chronologically, as above, or by **order of importance**, as are the effects in this chapter's other student model, "Hurray for America!" (p. 356).

Write a clear topic sentence that tells the topic, limits it, and indicates either causes or effects. You can state "causes" or "effects" outright or choose similar words. For causes try *reasons, explanations, problems, factors,* or phrases like *to bring about* or *to create.* For effects try *results, outcome, consequences,* or a phrase like *what follows* or *what happens to.*

Finally, take a few minutes to review the list of transitions and other connectors before you begin drafting.



See Chapter 19 for more on transitions and other connectors.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 24.3

Write out or type your working topic sentence, underlining the topic once and the limiting statement twice, and circle or box the causes or effects word. Now, using the model above as an example, list six or seven causes or effects, then cut the least promising. Keep only three or four main points. How will you arrange these points: chronologically, by importance, or both?

Drafting Causes or Effects Paragraphs

Moving into your first draft, keep the following points in mind:



See Chapter 1 for prewriting ideas.

1. You may need to pause as you work through your paragraph to do more prewriting in a separate file or on separate paper. Don't be discouraged when ideas stop flowing; take action.
2. Refer to your topic sentence frequently. It will keep you on track.
3. When you find one cause or effect leading to another, you are establishing a smooth transition of ideas.
4. Remember to keep asking the question "What do I mean by what I have just written?" Develop your subtopic points with specific, detailed examples and explanation.
5. Complete all thoughts so that the reader can see the cause/effect relationship. Notice that in "Hurray for America!" Takako tells us in her final effect example why it is important that her daughters learn English.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 24.4

After finishing your first rough draft, reread it, and highlight your subtopic sentences with a marker or your word-processing program's highlighter. Now underline the topic (cause or effect) of each once and the limiting statement twice, and circle or box any connecting words. Then copy these marked subtopic sentences, and submit them to your instructor. What parts of the draft do you like most and least? Answer in a paragraph.

FEEDBACK *Look at one or more classmates' drafts, and respond to the following two questions: Do the subtopic sentences name and limit each example? Are connecting words used effectively?*



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For more detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.

Revising Causes or Effects Paragraphs

As you begin revising your causes or effects first draft, use the following checklist as a guide:

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING CAUSES OR EFFECTS PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Have you used three or four causes *or* effects?
- ☐ Does your topic sentence name and limit the topic, and does it predict a causes or effects paragraph?
- ☐ Have you arranged your examples (causes or effects) by importance or by time?
- ☐ Have you included subtopic sentences that name and limit each main example?
- ☐ Are your causes or effects developed with specific words, details, and explanations?
- ☐ Do your causes or effects lead from one to the next, creating a chain of ideas?
- ☐ Have you used transitions and other connectors, especially in subtopic sentences?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence rename the topic and make a point?



For more on connectors, see pp. 288–289.

Alternate Assignments

Here are several more causes or effects writing options that may interest you. For any of the alternate assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Introduce each major cause or effect with a subtopic sentence.
- Arrange causes or effects by importance or time.
- Use connectors, especially in subtopic sentences.
- Develop examples with specific words, details, and explanations.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Causes or Effects

1. **Write a paragraph about the effects that a special place**—the Grand Canyon, Central Park, Disney World, your grandmother's house—**has had on you.** Perhaps you visited the Grand Canyon and felt awe at its size and beauty, a new appreciation of the Native Americans who left their artwork in the canyon, or dismay at the commercialization of this natural wonder. You could illustrate this topic with personal examples and possibly arrange them from least to most important. Be careful not to simply tell about your last vacation; select significant effects, and focus them with a limiting statement.
2. **Write a paragraph that helps you understand a problem.** If you know someone struggling with an addiction to alcohol, drugs, food, or online gaming, you could write about either the causes or the effects of this problem. For instance, people drink alcohol for many reasons (causes): to cope with stress, to socialize, to deal with loneliness or boredom, to enjoy the buzz or taste. But at some point some people begin to drink too much and too often. Your paragraph could explore what *causes* this behavior. Alternately, you might focus on the *effects* of overdrinking or alcoholism, such as hangovers, job loss, family breakdowns, health problems, and eventually death.

3. **Write a paragraph that builds a chain of causes or effects,** linking one series of causes or effects from beginning to end. You could write about a personal experience, such as what caused you to rear-end that Hummer during rush-hour traffic, or you could use the "they" voice of general knowledge.

BUILD A CHAIN OF CAUSES OR EFFECTS FOR GLOBAL WARMING



These photographs illustrate some existing (or possible future) effects. As the atmosphere heats up, glaciers and snowpack in the mountains are melting, sea ice is retreating from the Arctic, hurricanes are gaining more force, deserts are expanding, flooding is increasing, and more. Try focusing on just one piece of the larger chain of effects, showing how one effect can lead to another. For example, thinning sea ice shortens the polar bears' seal-hunting season. This reduces the polar bear population. However, because the remaining bears can't reach enough seals, they are more likely to scavenge in and around towns, causing problems for people. What might those problems be? ●







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ACTIVITY 24.4 WORKING ONLINE: *Causes and Effects of Diseases*

Go to WebMD.com (http://www.webmd.com) and look up information on any disease. What causes the illness, and what are its symptoms? Using the "they" voice, write a paragraph exploring either the causes or effects of this illness.





ACTIVITY 24.4 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Cause and Effect Review***

Take the Chapter 24 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Linking to Future Experience

Being able to identify causes and accurately predict effects are powerful skills. They will help you make good decisions in any context—in the voting booth, behind the wheel, and on the essay exam. You will consider carefully the effects (and chain of effects) of choosing classes and eventually a major, of exploring possible careers, of applying for jobs, and even of picking an interview outfit. If you earn grades you are proud of, or if you don't, you will benefit from thinking about the causes. You will find yourself writing about causes and effects in many of your college classes. For a history paper, you might investigate the causes or effects of a war. In chemistry, you would discuss the effects of various experiments in lab reports. And a psychology exam question might ask you to discuss the causes or effects of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Chapter Summary

1. Thinking about causes and effects helps us understand why things happen and helps us solve problems.
2. Events are often complex, rarely having only one cause or effect.
3. Writers often decide which causes or effects are most important and best to include, based on their topic, interest, and knowledge and the interest of readers.
4. Writers should complete all ideas and help readers make connections.
5. A topic sentence for a causes or effects paragraph should name and focus the topic, predicting either causes or effects.
6. Each major cause or effect should be introduced with a subtopic sentence.
7. Sentences—especially subtopic sentences—benefit from transitional words and other connectors.
8. Examples can be based on personal experience ("I") or general knowledge ("they").
9. Writing about causes or effects can be organized by time or order of importance.
10. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

Explaining How to Do and Understand Processes

25

[*Break down one of the following processes into a list of steps: going fishing, shopping for groceries, moving from one home to another.*]





KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in working with process explanations
  - Listing all needed steps
  - Explaining steps thoroughly
  - Defining all terms
  - Keeping sentence patterns interesting
- Learning from a student model
- Writing a process explanation paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

If you were telling a child how to catch a trout, you might describe the following steps: placing bait on the hook, casting the bait, reeling in the line, setting the hook after a strike, landing the fish, and taking it off the hook. When we give instructions like these, we are explaining a process in order *to do*.

Or you might find yourself explaining how fish like the salmon in the preceding picture migrate, discussing their life cycle—tiny fingerlings migrating to the ocean, growing up there, and then returning to their birth stream to spawn and die. This explanation would be a process in order *to understand*.

These two ways to explain processes—**to do** and **to understand**—are the focus of Chapter 25.

Linking to Previous Experience

What You Already Know about Process Explanations

Listening to, reading, and giving instructions on how to do things are common human activities. At an early age we listened as our parents explained how to tie our shoes. A bit later, we began reading and learned how to play Monopoly and bake a cake. A few steps further in life, and we began to *give* instructions, telling others how to tie a shoe, bake a cake, or play a board game. Process instructions are a great help in getting a job done, so skills in process explanations are practical knowledge. But beyond doing an immediate task, through personal observations and from others, we have learned what makes the world work—why electrical storms are dangerous, how our leaders are elected, what the best path is toward an education. In this chapter, we'll practice breaking down processes in a more formal, focused way.

HINT

Process often makes use of other writing patterns, such as description (Chapter 21), illustration (Chapter 23), and causes and effects (Chapter 24).

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 25.1

List one activity you can do or one you know about; then write out six steps to help someone else do or understand it. Sample **to-do** activities include how to parallel park, download music, or get to work on time. Sample **to-understand** activities include how a football defense is built, a car engine works, or an *American Idol* contestant makes it to the final round. For your process, were six steps enough or too many? What words might you need to explain further for readers unfamiliar with your process?

FEEDBACK *Trade your lists of steps with classmates; comment on the above questions.*



Developing Skills in Working with Process Explanations



The following activities will help you work with process explanations:

1. Listing all needed steps
2. Explaining steps thoroughly, giving reasons and warnings
3. Defining all terms
4. Keeping sentence patterns interesting

Listing All Needed Steps

It is important when giving instructions or when helping someone understand a process to include all necessary steps. In this photograph, people are in the process of clearing airport security. If one of them had not flown since 9/11 and so had no experience with the new airport security procedures, would the five steps below help the person clear security?

1. Have your boarding pass and photo ID ready.
2. Put your luggage into the X-ray scanner.
3. Put all metal objects into a basket, and put the basket into the X-ray scanner.
4. Walk through the metal detector.
5. Pick up your belongings.

The preceding list is a good start, but to really help the passenger, we should offer a more complete list of steps, like the following:

1. Be sure not to have any restricted items in your carry-on bags. Follow the airline's guidelines regarding the size of liquid containers, and pack all carry-on liquid products in a clear plastic bag.	**7.** If you have a camera or laptop, open the bag holding the item, put it in a basket, and pass it through the X-ray scanner.
2. Take care of all business before you pass through security.	**8.** Put your other carry-on bags through the scanner.
3. Have your boarding pass and photo ID in your hand.	**9.** Be ready, with boarding pass and ID in hand, to pass through the metal detector; wait for an OK from security.
4. Make eye contact with the security agent, and behave appropriately.	**10.** If the buzzer sounds from the metal detector, stop and follow instructions from security as they pass a metal-sensitive wand around you.
5. At the X-ray scanner remove your shoes and any metal accessories, place them in a basket, and put the basket onto the belt of the scanner.	**11.** If no buzzer sounds when you pass through the metal detector (or when you are cleared by security), move quickly to gather *all* your belongings from the end of the scanner.
6. Put all of your metal objects and the bag of liquid products in a basket; put the basket through the scanner.	**12.** Once you have been cleared by security, remember to stay within the secure area of the terminal.

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The number of steps and amount of information you give will depend on the complexity of the process, how much you know about it, and how much your audience is likely to know.



ACTIVITY 25.1 WORKING TOGETHER: *Listing All Needed Steps*

With group members, discuss the topics below, and then list all the steps the stated audience would need to complete the processes. Assign one person in the group to take notes.

1. Choose any *one* of these processes to **do**:
   a. Prepare for a test in school. (*Audience:* a friend your own age who is struggling in school)
   b. Calm an angry friend. (*Audience:* a friend who is shy and nonassertive)
   c. Complete any small project, such as changing guitar strings or baking cookies. (*Audience:* a 15-year-old who is unfamiliar with the project)
2. Choose any *one* of these processes to **understand**:
   a. Explain how people become alcoholics or become trapped by any addiction. (*Audience:* a person your age who may be falling into addiction)
   b. Explain how home recycling of paper, aluminum, and glass works. (*Audience:* young people who have never recycled before)
   c. Explain how some marriages end in divorce. (*Audience:* high school students taking a course on the family)
3. Choose a process of your own—one to do or to understand—and list your audience.

Explaining Steps Thoroughly

After you have listed the major steps in a process, you should think them through, considering how best to explain them. For instance, referring back to our example of how to clear airport security, what if a reader wondered why he or she should take care of all business before passing through the security check? If we tell readers that they will have to endure the clearance procedure all over again if they leave the secure area of the terminal, they will understand the **reason** for the suggestion and will be more likely to follow it.

Similar to giving reasons, **warnings** are important, especially if they help people avoid serious inconvenience or danger. For example, when you advise readers to "behave appropriately," they may pay more attention if you mention that jokes about bombs or highjacking may subject them to strip searches or worse.

ACTIVITY 25.2 *Explaining Steps Completely*

In the following student paragraph, which explains how tsunamis occur, the writer has listed three main steps (underlined) in the process. Read this paragraph closely, and then write in the space provided at least two places where the author has explained a step clearly, given reasons for a step, or included a warning to help people escape tsunamis.

Tsunamis, the Killer Waves

How do tsunamis (also called tidal waves) work? The first step is the moving of a huge amount of ocean water. This is usually caused by a big seaquake but

can also result from undersea volcanoes, landslides, or even a meteor or asteroid strike. If the earthquake shakes the sea floor sideways, there is no shifting of water, but if the floor drops low or raises high enough, all the water that has been moved will start a series of waves. These waves are the next step in the growth of the tsunami. They spread out in a circle, traveling hundreds of miles per hour with a great distance between each one, sometimes 200 to 600 miles. These waves are low, between 2 and 4 feet high, and ships at sea often don't even notice them. But when the waves near land, they slow down, and another phase of the process occurs as the waves begin to grow. When the crest (top) of the wave is fairly far from land, the water near shore gets sucked into the coming wave. If people see this, they often have several minutes to save themselves from the tsunami by getting far away from the water. As waves move in closer to shore, they begin to grow and can reach a height of more than 100 feet! If the seashore and surrounding land are fairly flat, the wall of water can travel far inland, snapping trees, crushing houses, drowning people, and carrying them out to sea. Fortunately, scientists around the world have been working on an early warning system to detect tsunamis and alert people in the path of these killer waves.

—*Aasim Alhussani*

Defining All Terms

For people to follow process explanations, they must be familiar with all important terms used. For example, referring back to our airport security process in "Listing All Needed Steps," what are some terms that the inexperienced air traveler might need to know? How about *restricted items*? Should we give examples like scissors, pocket knives, liquids or aerosol cans over 3 ounces? How about *X-ray scanner* and *metal detector*? Should we distinguish between them, perhaps comparing the metal detector to a device that looks like a doorframe? Is the term *wand* clear enough?

On the other hand, you don't want to burden your reader with unneeded definitions. Might we expect most adult travelers to know terms like *ID, ticket, laptop, video camera,* and *terminal*?



For more on defining terms, see Chapter 28.



Knowing your audience will help you choose when to define a term.

ACTIVITY 25.3 *Defining All Terms*

Choose one of the processes you developed from Activity 25.1, *list* all the terms you think your target audience might need to have explained, and then briefly *define* them. You might use a dictionary, compare or contrast the term with another, explain how the item works, or find a good synonym for it.

Keeping Sentence Patterns Interesting

Process explanations can be more or less interesting based on the way sentences are put together. For instance, compare the two excerpts below from a student-model paragraph on making dumplings. Which one seems more readable?

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A. Make the stuffing. Add the hamburger. Or add pork. Or add shrimp. Add oil, soy sauce, and other ingredients. Mix them evenly. Make the dumplings taste better. Add more stuffing. Keep the dumplings from falling apart. Squeeze out the excess juice. Assemble the dumplings.

B. At this point make the stuffing. In a mixing bowl, add the hamburger (or pork or shrimp), oil, soy sauce, and other ingredients, and then mix them evenly. To contain more stuffing in the dumplings (for better taste) and to keep the dumplings from falling apart, squeeze out the excess juice. When the dough and stuffing are ready, you can assemble the dumplings.

Version B is easier to read and more engaging than Version A because B's sentences flow more smoothly. The writer accomplished this in several ways:

1. **Variety in sentence length:** a mix of short and long sentences
2. **Variety in sentence openers:** fewer sentences beginning with command verbs like *add, mix,* and *make*
3. **Sentence transitions:** *at this point, in, or, and, then, when*

ACTIVITY 25.4 *Keeping Sentence Patterns Interesting*

Rewrite or retype the brief paragraph below on planting tulips so that the sentences flow more smoothly. Use the dumpling-making paragraph B as a model.

> Now is the time to plant your bulbs. Dig holes 8 inches deep. Space the bulbs about 5 inches apart. This gives them room to grow. Fill the holes with water. Wait for the water to recede. Place some bulb starter in the holes. Place the bulbs pointy side up. Fill the holes with soil. Press the soil down firmly. This removes the air pockets. Leave a hill over the bulb. Don't leave a depression. Water can sit in a depression. This water can rot the bulb.

HINT

For help with transitions, see Chapter 19. For more on sentence variety, see Chapter 32.

Learning from a Student Model: A Process Paragraph

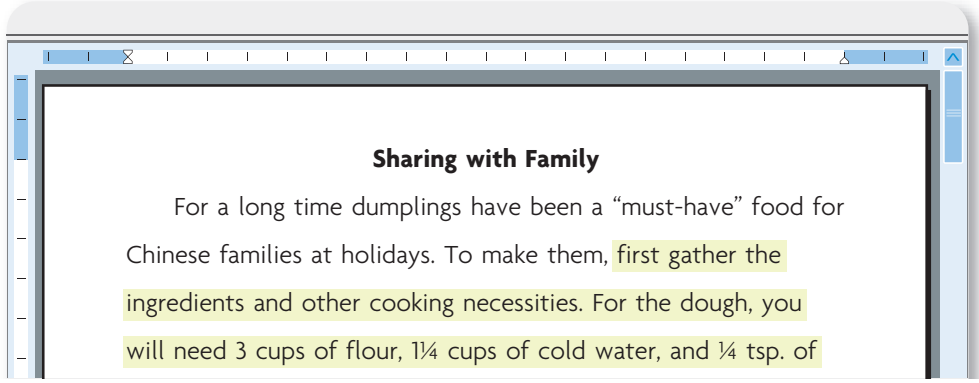
HINT

See Chapter 23 for more on writing subtopic sentences.

Read the following student model closely, noticing in particular the writer's clear focus in her **topic sentence**; her well-linked **subtopic sentences**; her **chronological** (time order) arrangement of major steps; and her **development** of steps through **specific words**, **details**, **explanations**, **reasons**, and **warnings**.

HINT

For more on connectors, see pp. 288–289.



Sharing with Family

For a long time dumplings have been a "must-have" food for Chinese families at holidays. To make them, first gather the ingredients and other cooking necessities. For the dough, you will need 3 cups of flour, 1¼ cups of cold water, and ¼ tsp. of

salt. And for the stuffing, you will need 1 cup of ground beef, pork, or shrimp; 1 tbsp. of soy sauce; 1 tsp. of salt; 3 tbsp. of sesame oil; and 1 green onion, 1½ cups of Chinese cabbage, and 2 slices of ginger, all finely chopped. Also, have on hand 2 medium-sized mixing bowls, 1 large pot, a mixing spoon, and a rolling pin. The next step is making the dough. Add salt to the flour, mix water in (a little at a time—too much will make the dough runny), and knead the dough until it is firm. Cover the bowl, and let the dough sit for about 15 minutes. Now make the stuffing. In a mixing bowl, add and mix evenly the meat, oil, soy sauce, and other ingredients. To prevent the dumplings from falling apart, squeeze out the excess juice. When the dough and stuffing are ready, assemble the dumplings. First, divide the dough into about 50 walnut-sized pieces; then roll them flat to 3 inches across. Wet the dough's edges, add about ½ ounce of stuffing, and then fold the dough over into a semicircle, pinching the edges shut. Now 1 dumpling is done; only 49 more to go! To finish, all you have to do is boil them. Add the dumplings to the boiling water (carefully so you don't scald yourself!). When the water returns to a boil, add cold water. Do this 3 times, stirring so dumplings do not stick to the pot. Now your delicious meal is ready to serve. Making dumplings is a lot of work for one person, but it can be fun for the whole family to do the cooking together and then share the meal.

—YanZheng Bai

To-do processes often benefit from a preliminary step, in which supplies are brought together and organized.

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THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What point does YanZheng make in her last sentence?
4. Copy each of the subtopic sentences, and underline the main step (example) once and the statement about it twice. Circle the connectors: transitions, repeat words, synonyms, and pronouns.
5. List five transitional words that show time arrangement within the steps.

6. What warnings does the author include?
7. Tell how several specific words make any part of YanZheng's process clearer.
8. Name three ways to further develop any major step in this paragraph. Consider active verbs, specific words, sensory details, revealing thoughts and emotions, and further explanation, including reasons and warnings.

HINT

For more on considering audience, see Chapter 1.

Writing a Process Explanation Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a paragraph of roughly 250 to 300 words that explains how to *do* or *understand* a process. A *to-do* process might involve instructions for cooking a dish or building a small project; a *to-understand* process might explain a force of nature like a hurricane, a human condition like depression, or a technological process like a blog. It is essential to begin with a clear topic sentence and then to break the process down into a series of steps, usually organized chronologically (by time sequence).

HINT

Remember that after reading your explanation, readers should be able to understand a potentially complicated process or be able to physically complete a task.

Audience and Purpose

When you explain a process, you will do a better job if you know your audience. If you anticipate how much your reader knows about your topic, you will come closer to explaining enough but not too much. For instance, in "Sharing with Family" (pp. 370–371), YanZheng does not define terms like "rolling pin" or "Chinese cabbage," and she expects readers will know what phrases like "knead the dough" and "finely chopped" mean. If her audience has even a basic knowledge of cooking, explaining these points is unnecessary.

Of course, you are writing to communicate information, but you may do so in a way that entertains. The information you give may also move people to think differently about your process or to take some action.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Process Paragraphs

Look to your own life for processes to write about. Think about pastimes that interest you and that you want to discuss, for example, sports. In this one topic you might know how to throw a curve ball, shoot a perfect layup, grind a rail, or block a soccer goal. There are many possibilities. However, remember to *limit* your process to what can be explained within one paragraph. It's too much to try to explain the whole process by which the Red Sox made it to a World Series, but you could discuss a few important steps the manager took to build that winning team.

Your approach can be to do (throw a curve) or to understand (how the team was built). The following topic list may give you a few helpful ideas:

English Review Note

Other possible topics:

How to . . .

—Obtain a visa

—Adopt a new culture

—Have your transcript evaluated

—Meet new friends

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR PROCESS: **HOW TO. . .**

1. Plan a great vacation
2. Break off a relationship or meet a new person (make a date)
3. Fix a specific small appliance
4. Win a hand of poker
5. Shop for bargains

6. Work on a car (be specific: detailing, changing the oil, flushing the radiator)
7. Ride a bicycle (or teach a child to)
8. Survive on a deserted island
9. Lower your car insurance
10. Program a TiVo (or write a text message, download music, operate a digital camera)
11. Create a website or blog (or get started on Facebook or another networking site)
12. Survive boot camp
13. Plan a birthday party
14. Get children to bed on time (or convince them to eat a healthy meal, etc.)



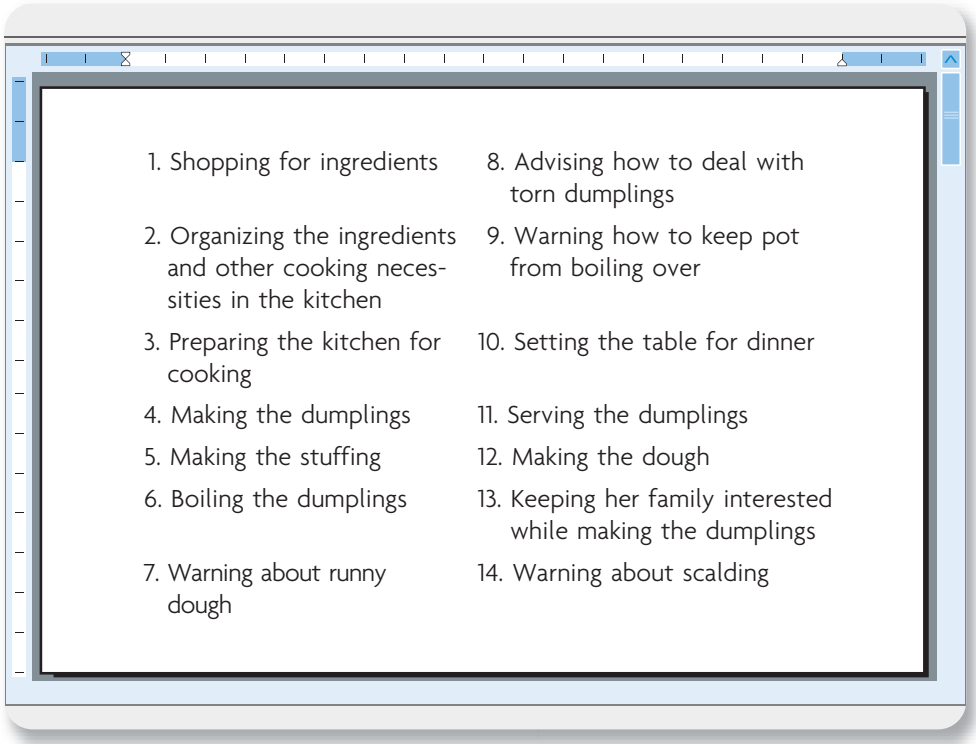
REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Write a paragraph explaining how to calculate or reduce your carbon footprint. The following websites might provide inspiration and ideas:

"Calculate Your Impact" on *Climate Crisis*: http://www.climatecrisis.net/take-action/carboncalculator/

"Reducing Your Impact" on *Carbon Footprint*: http://www.carbonfootprint.com/

After choosing several topics, create a list of steps that illustrate them. Some processes can be treated as either to-do or to-understand, so you will need to pick which method seems best for your paragraph. Choosing the hands-on approach in "Sharing with Family" (pp. 370–371), YanZheng started with this list:


1. Shopping for ingredients
2. Organizing the ingredients and other cooking necessities in the kitchen
3. Preparing the kitchen for cooking
4. Making the dumplings
5. Making the stuffing
6. Boiling the dumplings
7. Warning about runny dough
8. Advising how to deal with torn dumplings
9. Warning how to keep pot from boiling over
10. Setting the table for dinner
11. Serving the dumplings
12. Making the dough
13. Keeping her family interested while making the dumplings
14. Warning about scalding

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Seeing that she had plenty of material, YanZheng moved ahead, focusing, combining, and reorganizing her steps.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 25.2

List your topic, approach (to do or to understand), audience, and steps. Is the topic limited enough? What further steps might your audience need, or which don't they need and why?

Organizing Process Paragraphs

YanZheng began her to-do paragraph with this rough topic sentence (topic underlined once and limiting statement underlined twice):

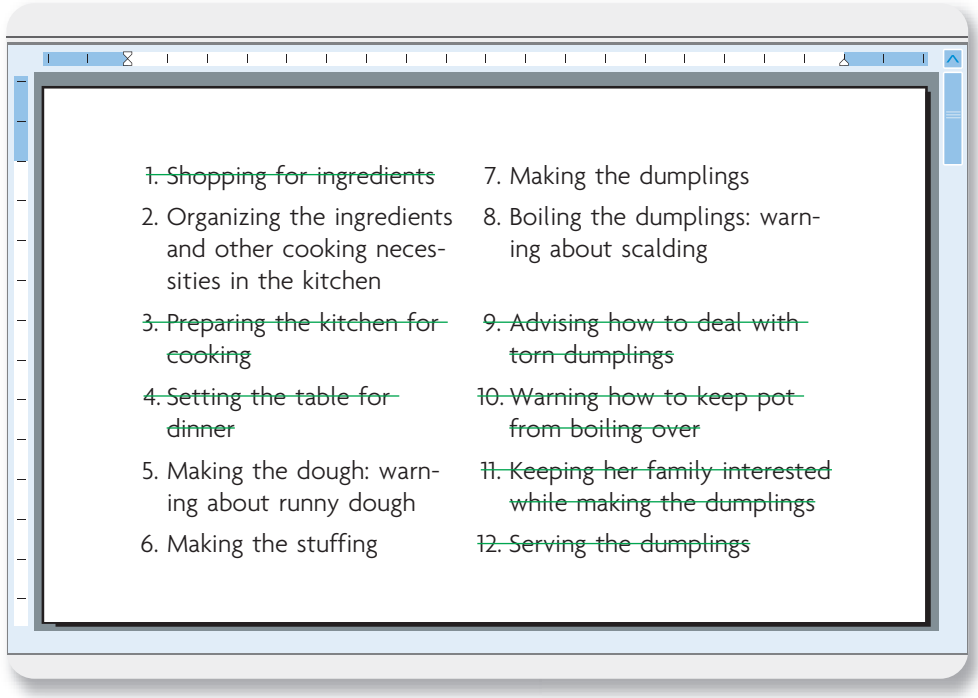
I am going to tell you how to make delicious dumplings.

With her rough topic sentence in mind, she was able to focus and organize her major steps. First, she arranged them chronologically, then she crossed several out to limit the length of her explanation, and finally she combined several steps.

Note her prewriting list below:

HINT

Chronologically means in the order that time passes.

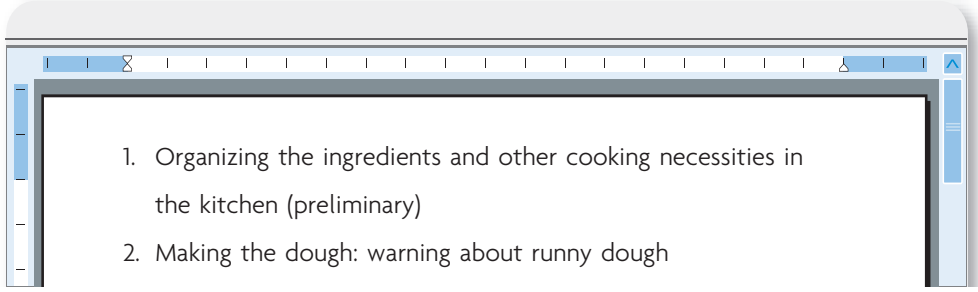


HINT

For more on outlining, see Chapter 1.

Here is YanZheng's working outline.

WORKING OUTLINE FOR "SHARING WITH FAMILY"



3. Making the stuffing
4. Making the dumplings
5. Boiling the dumplings: warning about scalding

Note: To-do processes often benefit from a **preliminary step** in which supplies are brought together and organized, as in step 1 above.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 25.3

Write out your working topic sentence, underlining the topic once and the limiting statement twice. Now, write out your working outline, including a subtopic sentence for each major step. What words should you define for your audience, and what warnings should you give and why?

HINT

After you have outlined your paragraph, take a few minutes to review the list of transitions and other connectors (pp. 288–289) before you begin drafting.

Drafting Process Paragraphs

Moving into your first draft, keep the following points in mind:

1. Process explanations tend to flow naturally, one step after the other, but you may find that you have begun your process too early or are including nonessential steps, both of which can create focus problems.
2. Explain the *why* behind steps, and give *warnings* when needed.
3. *Define* any terms that might be puzzling to your reader (try placing your definitions in parentheses).
4. Use specific words, including exact measurements where needed (use numerals).

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 25.4

A. After finishing your first rough draft, use a highlighter or your computer program's highlight function to call out your subtopic sentences, and circle any connecting words. For instructor input, create a new document listing your subtopic sentences, with connecting words circled or boxed.

B. What parts of your draft do you like most and least—and why? Answer in a paragraph.

FEEDBACK *As an alternative to the above activities, trade drafts with a partner, mark the writer's subtopic sentences and connecting words, then respond to the draft's strengths and weaknesses.*



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For more detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.

Revising Process Paragraphs

As you begin revising your process first draft, use the following checklist as a guide:

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING PROCESS PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Does your topic sentence name and limit a topic that predicts a process explanation?
- ☐ Are your steps arranged chronologically (by time)?
- ☐ Have you grouped major steps, beginning each with a subtopic sentence?
- ☐ Who is the audience for your process explanation? How much do they currently know about this process?
- ☐ Have you explained the *why* behind steps where needed and given warnings?
- ☐ What terms might puzzle your reader? Have you defined them?
- ☐ Have you developed your steps with specific words and details, using precise measurements?
- ☐ Have you used transitions and other connectors, especially in sub-topic sentences?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence rename the topic and make a point?

Alternate Assignments

For any of the following alternate assignments, be sure to do the following:

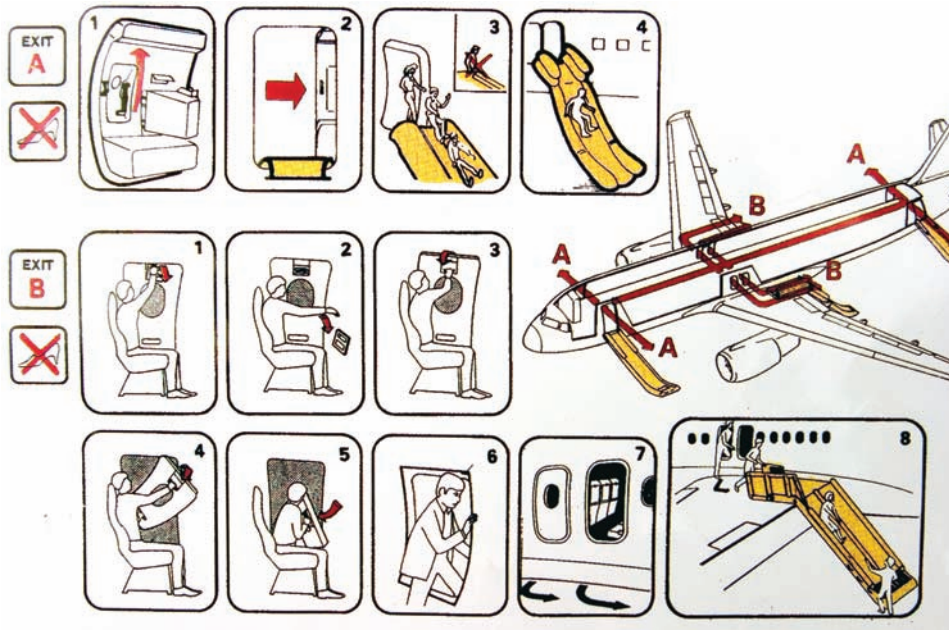
- Write instructions for doing a task, or explain how something is done or functions.
- List and explain steps, and, where needed, give warnings.
- Define unfamiliar terms for your audience.
- Develop examples with specific words, details, and explanations.
- Begin with a topic sentence, link sentences, and end with a final point.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Process

1. **Write a paragraph that shows how to improve some process from your job, home life, or school life.** For example, if you work in a restaurant, you might be able to improve the opening, shift change, or closing procedures. As you detail the steps currently in place, you would add your suggestions for change, explaining why the changes would benefit the restaurant. Perhaps the bussers, not the waiters, should do the silverware roll-ups, or maybe the bartenders should cut fruit and resupply the liquor and beer before the restaurant closes. Your purpose would be persuasive, to influence management to follow your plan.
2. **Write a to-do paragraph that shows someone how to win at a video game.** For instance, if you play *World of Warcraft* (pictured here), you might advise a new gamer on how to win at a quest or work with a guild



to complete a successful raid. Alternately, you could write a to-understand paragraph, explaining your game strategy. With this approach, focus on a general overview or select a small part of the game that can be detailed in a few hundred words. How might you use a screen shot like this one to help explain your process?



3. **Write a paragraph that explains how people celebrate some special event in your culture** (Cinco de Mayo, Ramadan, Yom Kippur, Lantern Festival). Treat your explanation as a process, and organize it chronologically. For example, decorating a Christmas tree could be divided into the following major steps: buying a tree, selecting lights and ornaments, draping the tree in tinsel and hanging the ornaments, and arranging presents at its base.

4. **Storyboard (illustrate frame by frame) any process from the topic list in this chapter**. Use this airline safety card as a model. Then write a process paragraph on that same topic. Submit it, along with the illustrated process, to your instructor. For process writing assignments, storyboarding can be a useful prewriting tool: it helps visual learners, in particular, organize and break down steps.

HINT

See Chapter 32 for help with achieving sentence variety.



ACTIVITY 25.5 WORKING ONLINE: *Using Transitions*

Go to http://www.ehow.com and read any article; topics include how to treat a broken arm, get rid of hiccups, become a Disneyland Paris tour guide, and channel spirits. Convert the numbered list into a seamless paragraph that uses transitions and other connectors; be sure to use a variety of sentence structures.

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ACTIVITY 25.6 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Process Review***

Take the Chapter 25 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Linking to Future Experience

Process explanations help us satisfy our curiosity and ultimately succeed in life. Being able to break down a process into clear steps is a valuable skill, whether we're giving good directions to a friend, describing a potential plan of action to our boss, or reviewing concepts for an exam. Many academic disciplines and career programs assign process analysis essays and reports: for example, biology, English, history, nursing, HVAC, fire science, and auto mechanics.

Chapter Summary

1. Process explanations help people get jobs done and understand how the world functions. Process analysis skills are practical life skills.
2. Knowing your audience makes writing process instructions easier and more efficient.
3. Process instructions require a complete list of steps.
4. Each step or suggestion must be explained clearly; detail reasons for the steps and give warnings where needed.
5. Defining terms is an essential part of process instruction; whether a word or concept needs defining depends on your previous knowledge and your audience's.
6. The paragraph should begin with a topic sentence that names the topic and predicts a process explanation.
7. Major step groupings should begin with a subtopic sentence.
8. Sentences should be smoothly linked with transitions and other connectors.
9. Process writing is organized chronologically.
10. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

Exploring Similarities and Differences (Comparison and Contrast) 26

[*In a paragraph, discuss the similarities and differences between playing a game just for fun and playing one competitively*]





KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in comparing and contrasting
  - Making a meaningful comparison or contrast
  - Making an interesting comparison or contrast
  - Developing topics thoroughly
  - Using transitions and other connectors
- Learning from a student model
- Writing a comparison or contrast paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

What is similar about the two pictures on the previous page? They each show people playing tug-of-war, yes, but what other similarities are there? In both photos, the groups compete outdoors on the grass, and the sun is casting shadows. Everyone is dressed casually. Now what differences can you find? One group consists of male teens, dressed similarly in black shirts and boots, struggling mightily to win their competition. The other group is younger, a mix of male and female children dressed in a variety of colors and wearing sneakers. They look directly at the camera, and they are all smiling. If you look more closely, you can see even more differences.

Whenever we notice similarities or differences between people, places, events, objects, or ideas, we are **comparing** or **contrasting**. This is the focus of Chapter 26.

Linking to Previous Experience

What You Already Know about Comparing and Contrasting

Comparing and contrasting are basic acts of communication, and we use them often. When trying to describe a bichon frisé to a friend who has never seen one, you might say it looks like a toy poodle. Your boyfriend might remind you of Orlando Bloom, or your girlfriend might resemble Beyoncé. When describing a family member, you might say your brother is a slug (lazy and slimy-looking, hiding in a dark room) or your sister is a princess (spoiled, demanding, and self-centered). Comparing and contrasting allow us to communicate better by linking the known to the unknown.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 26.1

Tell about two things you have recently compared or contrasted with each other, such as movies, cars, people, places, or events. What points did you find to compare or contrast? Why did you make the comparison/contrast: to inform, entertain, or persuade someone? Did you succeed in your purpose?

FEEDBACK *In pairs or small groups, use this same comparison/contrast to inform, entertain, and then persuade your listener. Discuss which approach is most effective, given your specific topic and intentions.*



Developing Skills in Comparing and Contrasting

The following activities will help you work with comparisons and contrasts:

1. Making a meaningful comparison or contrast
2. Making an interesting comparison or contrast
3. Developing topics thoroughly
4. Using transitions and other connectors



Making a Meaningful Comparison or Contrast

All writing that is easy to read has a clear purpose and point. The same holds true for your comparison or contrast paragraphs. Without a clear idea of what you want to say, you risk ending up with a fuzzy outline like the following:



UNFOCUSED TOPIC SENTENCE

- Soccer and American football are similar sports.
  - Soccer is played with a ball, and so is football.
  - Soccer is usually played outdoors, and so is football.
  - Soccer games are won by scoring points, and so are football games.
  - Soccer has defensive and offensive moves, and so does football.
  - Soccer requires running, and so does football.
  - Soccer players must be fast and agile, and so must football players.

Such a list would likely produce an unfocused paragraph, one difficult to write and read. Here are several more effective approaches:

FOCUSED TOPIC SENTENCES

- Soccer requires more agility than football.
- Football players are more prone to injury than soccer players.
- Soccer has far more fans worldwide than American football.

ACTIVITY 26.1 **WORKING TOGETHER:** ***Making a Meaningful Comparison or Contrast***



For each topic below, brainstorm with group members to find several similarities and differences. Together, come up with three statements that focus the topic with a point; write these in the space below. Assign each group member one of the points. Based on your point, each of you will write a focused topic sentence that also indicates your approach—comparison *or* contrast.

EXAMPLE:

Topic: GM Hummer versus Toyota Prius
Unfocused topic sentence: Hummers are big SUVs, and Priuses are smaller vehicles.
Points that could be made:

A. *People who drive Hummers are making a far different statement about themselves than are those who drive Priuses.*

B. *Hummers are more spacious vehicles than Priuses.*

C. *Hummers are harder on the environment than Priuses.*



For more on topic sentences, see Chapter 19.

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Possible topic sentence: *The Toyota Prius, a hybrid, is a more environmentally conscious vehicle than the GM Hummer.*

1. **Topic:** Adults in their thirties versus teenagers

   Unfocused topic sentence: Most adults in their thirties are different from teenagers.

   Points that could be made:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Possible topic sentence: _____

2. **Topic:** Sharks versus grizzly bears

   Unfocused topic sentence: Sharks and grizzly bears can grow to be huge.

   Points that could be made:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Possible topic sentence: _____

Making an Interesting Comparison or Contrast

Once you have found a meaningful topic, be sure to ask which is the more interesting treatment of the topic—comparison or contrast? The answer, of course, depends on your (and your audience's) interest in and knowledge about the subject. When you have a strong point to make, you are more likely to choose the more interesting treatment.

To liven up your topic, do the unexpected: if two points seem similar, contrast them; if they seem different, compare them. Looking at the hurricane/tornado topic below, you might be tempted to focus on the similarities between two clearly destructive forces of nature. But if you wanted to argue that hurricanes are more dangerous, then your purpose would lead you to contrast them.

	DIFFERENCES	SIMILARITIES
HURRICANE	**TORNADO**	**HURRICANES AND TORNADOES**
Wide path of destruction	Narrow path of destruction	Cause destruction, death
Form over ocean	Form over land	High winds
Lasts for hours	Lasts for minutes	Can be unpredictable
Fewer occur	More occur	Researched by scientists
Less powerful winds	More powerful winds	Inspire fear

TOPIC SENTENCE: While tornadoes cause much damage and loss of life, hurricanes are far worse calamities.

ACTIVITY 26.2 *Making an Interesting Comparison or Contrast*

Choose one of the following topic pairs. On separate paper, list their similarities and differences, choose the more interesting approach, and then write a topic sentence indicating comparison or contrast and your focus.

Topic pairs:

Kwanzaa/Christmas	Tough boss/easy boss	Boot camp/summer camp
Volcano/forest fire	Spiderman/Batman	VW bug/Mini Cooper
Your children or siblings: oldest/youngest	*Live Free or Die Hard*/ *Die Hard*	Any two popular singers or bands



Use the preceding hurricane/tornado example as a model for Activity 26.2.

Developing Topics Thoroughly

To make comparisons and contrasts interesting, you should explain them clearly and develop them with detailed, layered examples. For instance, to develop several points of contrast from the hurricane/tornado example on page 382, we could list the points below and then add some second-level examples:



See Chapters 19 and 23 for more on developing examples.

HURRICANE:

- Main example: wide path of destruction
- Second-level example (becomes more specific): In 2005 hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida, leaving 800 miles of destruction in its wake. Katrina put 400,000 people out of work and killed 1,836.

TORNADO:

- Main example: narrow path of destruction
- Second-level example (becomes more specific): Most tornadoes travel only a few miles before they lose their force and ascend back into the clouds. Their path of destruction is seldom more than a mile wide, and tornadoes often leave structures standing, seeming to jump over them. The Tri State Tornado of 1925 was the worst in our history, but it killed only 625 people.

ACTIVITY 26.3 *Explaining Points Completely*

In the following student paragraph, the author has listed three main points (underlined) to explain some differences between office and railroad work. Read this selection closely, and then (in the space provided) write out several second-level examples that the author has used to develop each of his three main points.

A Way of Life

Office workers have a safe, cushy job compared with railroad workers like me. For one, the "weather" in our work spaces is far different. White-collar employees may have to "brave the elements" in their drive to work, but once there, they enjoy controlled climates: heat in the winter, air conditioning in the summer. In contrast, when I reach my outside "office," I deal with rough conditions. The winter brings snow, sleet, and a sub-zero wind chill that leaves my fingers numb. Then the summer brings 100-degree days,

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rain, humidity, stinging insects, and sweat dripping into my eyes. While the most offensive chemical an office worker may encounter is the aftershave of an elevator companion, I am exposed to dangerous material almost daily. For example, I once welded a bracket on top of a hopper car loaded with the same substance used in the Oklahoma City bombing. Often while working under a railcar, I've found myself wondering, "What *is* that slimy green goo just inches from my face." Besides weather and chemicals, the greatest difference between office and railroad jobs is in our equipment. The white-collar employee's equipment hazards might be losing a computer file or pinching a finger in the copier. In contrast, my equipment can be lethal. My bolt cutter can lop off a finger, my arc welder generates 1,000 degrees of heat and throws molten steel everywhere, my hydraulic jacks raise a boxcar off a track, and trains roar by at 70 miles per hour—4 feet away from me. However, despite the harsher working conditions, I enjoy being outdoors—watching the seasons change, seeing the animals, feeling wind on my face—and would not choose to be trapped for the rest of my life in an office.

—*Shane Smith*

1. Second-level examples for point about weather:

   Office job: _____ Railroad job: _____

   _____

2. Second-level examples for point about chemicals:

   Office job: _____ Railroad job: _____

   _____

3. Second-level examples for point about equipment:

   Office job: _____ Railroad job: _____

   _____

Using Transitions and Other Connectors

Transitions (like the ones below) and other connectors are important in a comparison or contrast paragraph, regardless of its organization. They signal the switches between two or more topics.



For more on organizing paragraphs, see Chapters 1 and 19. For more on using connectors, see pp. 288–289.

TRANSITIONS FOR COMPARING

alike	both	like	resembling
also	in the same way	likewise	similarly

TRANSITIONS FOR CONTRASTING

after all	dissimilar	nevertheless	though
although	even though	on the contrary	unlike
but	however	on the other hand	whereas
difference	in contrast	otherwise	yet
differs from	in spite of	still	

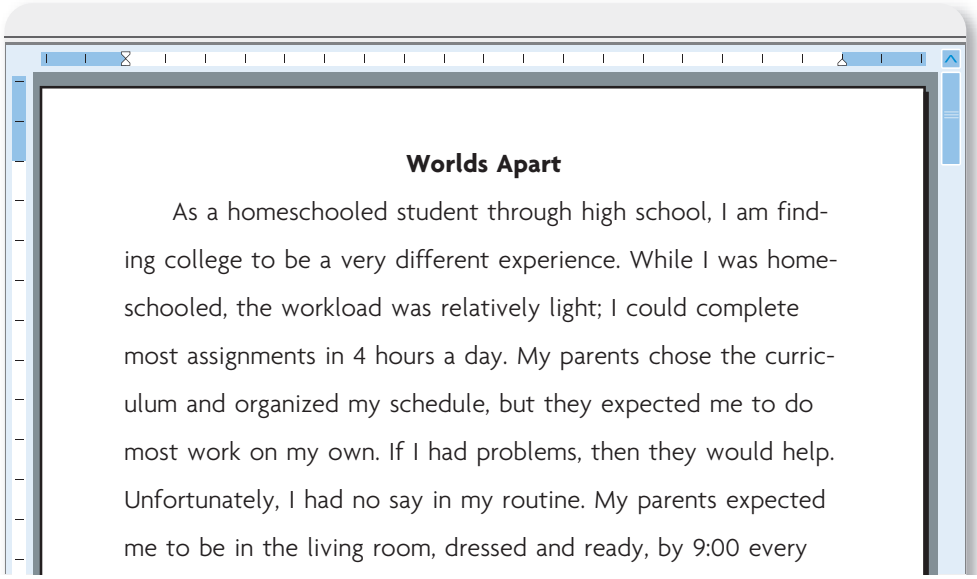
ACTIVITY 26.4 *Using Transitions and Other Connectors*

Complete each sentence with a suitable transitional word.

1. _____ Barry Bonds will pass Hank Aaron's home-run record soon, some still wonder if Bonds should be admitted to the Baseball Hall of Fame.
2. J. K. Rowling says that she and her character Hermione Granger are _____ in many ways.
3. There may be as many as a million sperm whales left in the world's oceans, _____ with the humpbacks, which number only 20,000.
4. _____ , contestants on the reality show *Survivor* ignore the ocean filled with food and instead chase rats with sticks.
5. Several studies show that _____ communications technology Americans are becoming increasingly socially isolated.
6. MySpace has taken steps to protect young people; _____ , they still are not safe from the predators who use the site.
7. _____ , Belize and Costa Rica are popular ecotourist destinations.
8. Vincent Van Gogh barely made a living in his own time, _____ not long ago one of his paintings sold for $82.5 million.
9. Angelina Jolie, _____ many wealthy people, gives one-third of her earnings to charitable causes.
10. While insurance rates for teens are expensive, many older adults _____ find themselves forced to pay high rates.

Learning from a Student Model: A Contrast Paragraph

Read the following student model closely, noticing in particular the writer's clear focus in her **topic sentence**, her well-linked **subtopic sentences**, her arrangement of major points by **importance**, her overall arrangement of the paragraph by the **block method**, and her **development** of examples through **specific words** and **detailed explanations**.



Worlds Apart

As a homeschooled student through high school, I am finding college to be a very different experience. While I was homeschooled, the workload was relatively light; I could complete most assignments in 4 hours a day. My parents chose the curriculum and organized my schedule, but they expected me to do most work on my own. If I had problems, then they would help. Unfortunately, I had no say in my routine. My parents expected me to be in the living room, dressed and ready, by 9:00 every



For more on subtopic sentences, see Chapter 23.



For more about the block method, see p. 389.

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morning, 180 days a year. Another downside to homeschooling was that I saw few people daily. Although I had many friends, it wasn't the same as hurrying through corridors filled with students talking and laughing on their way to classes. Now imagine how different from high school college is for me. First, the workload is greater. I am taking 15 credit hours and studying almost 40 hours a week. At times it seems overwhelming, but now I have more help than my parents could offer. Professors make difficult subjects easier by meeting one-on-one and encouraging study groups. Also, the Math Resource and Writing Centers offer support. I'm still an independent learner, but college provides opportunities to collaborate. In addition, I now control my own schedule. If I don't want classes every day, it's up to me. But the greatest and most enjoyable change from high school is all the new people! This year I have met students from a range of backgrounds, with a variety of worldviews. I am fascinated by this diversity. I loved my homeschooling, and it was right for me at the time; but now I look forward to learning everything my new world has to offer.

—Katherine Priest

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What point does Katherine make in her last sentence?
4. What four points does the author discuss in relation to high school and then college?
5. Copy each of the subtopic sentences, and underline the main point (example) once and the statement about it twice. Circle the connectors: transitions, repeat words, synonyms, and pronouns.
6. Copy the transitional sentence that the author uses to switch from high school to college. Underline the topic once and the statement made about it twice, and circle the transitional words.
7. Tell how several specific words make any part of Katherine's explanation clearer.
8. Name three ways to further develop any major point in this paragraph. Consider active verbs, specific words, sensory details, revealing thoughts and emotions, comparisons or contrasts, and further explanation.

Writing a Comparison or Contrast Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that compares *or* contrasts two people, places, events, objects, or ideas. While writers often develop their work with both comparison and contrast, for this paragraph, choose one or the other. Then decide which method of overall organization to use: block or point-by-point. Be sure to begin with a focused topic sentence that indicates comparison or contrast.



For help choosing a method of organization, see p. 389.

Audience and Purpose

What point do you want to make about your topic, and who do you want to tell about it? Shane and Katherine, who wrote this chapter's student models, were both writing to let readers know more about their lives. In writing his paragraph, Shane realized that despite working in conditions many people would not want to face, he still prefers his outdoor job. While valuing her homeschooled K-12 education, Katherine found that she was ready for a change. The topic you choose can give you, too, a chance to reflect on your life or the world around you. Identifying your readers will help you choose interesting points and decide how much to explain to them.

Your key purpose is to communicate information, but you may do so in a way that entertains. What you write may also move readers to think differently or even take action.



For more on audience, see Chapter 1.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Comparison or Contrast Paragraphs

As you think through topic possibilities, be open to less obvious choices. Picking topics that you are familiar with—such as two family members or two cars you have owned—can work well. However, you might surprise yourself and your reader by choosing topics a bit out of the ordinary. For example, compare someone you know (like your uncle) to an animal (such as a camel). Does your uncle have long legs, seem to plod as he walks, and drink large amounts at one sitting? And how about his personality? Like a camel, he might be prone to snap at people.

However, be careful when trying a more creative approach not to choose topics that are too difficult to compare. For instance, there may not be a point to comparing a cell phone with an electric razor. The following topic list may give you a few helpful ideas:

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR COMPARISON OR CONTRAST

1. **People:** family members, coaches, teachers, employers, significant others, church leaders, politicians, movie stars, athletes, criminals, soldiers
2. **Groups:** sports teams, hunters, anglers, bands, choirs, youth groups, motorcycle clubs, subcultures (Goths, skinheads, punks, skateboarders, gamers, SCA members), your friends
3. **Places:** cities, outdoor locations (parks, mountains, beaches, prairies, deserts, wetlands, swamps), space locations (moon, planets, sun), imaginary places (Hogwarts, Middle Earth)
4. **Jobs:** good, bad, part-time; career; chores (household work, car maintenance)
5. **School courses:** math, English, history, shop, art, physical education



Other possible topics:
—Two languages
—The attitudes toward punctuality in the U.S. and in your native country
—The role of the elderly in two different cultures

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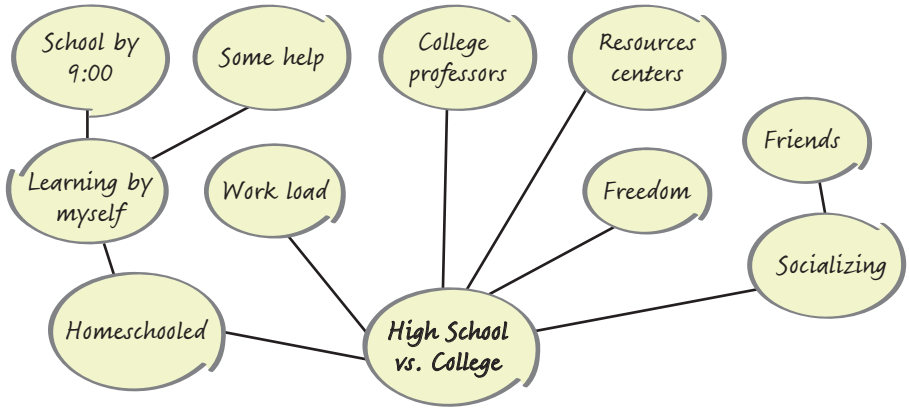
6. **Events:** concerts, dances, graduation, sports, political rallies, speeches, memorials, marriages, funerals, births, roasts, vacations, hospital emergencies
7. **Objects:** cars, bicycles, types of machinery, phones, MP3 players, cameras, bridges, buildings
8. **Concepts:** political systems, counterculture, winning, losing, vegetarianism, environmentalism, recycling, sex appeal, peer pressure, reality TV, global warming
9. **Life stages:** childhood, teenage years, young adulthood, middle age; single life; marriage
10. **Educational stages:** preschool, kindergarten, elementary, high school, college; other learning experiences (fishing, bowling, dating, fighting, sailing, riding a subway)



COMPARE OR CONTRAST: ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Compare or contrast two outdoor activities, two natural spaces, or an outdoor space and an indoor space. Or compare or contrast your attitude toward conservation with that of a classmate, friend, parent, teacher, or celebrity. ●

After you have settled on a topic, you need to focus it and find something to say about it. A cluster like the one below from the high school-versus-college model could help you find your focus and point and build your list of similarities and differences.



Now list both similarities and differences:

DIFFERENCES		SIMILARITIES
HIGH SCHOOL	**COLLEGE**	**HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE**
Working alone	Working more with others	Both offer help with work
Easy work	Hard work	Both require work
Less freedom	More freedom	Both have some freedom
Fewer friends	More social life	Both offer social life
Fewer activities	More activities	Both have activities
Living room	College campus	Both have a study area
Food close by	Trips to cafeteria	Both have food available
Security with parents	Uncertainty with strangers	Both have people present

Katherine decided that differences were the most interesting for her topic, chose her four most important points, and then moved on to selecting her overall arrangement.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 26.2

Using the previous example as a pattern, list similarities and differences for the paired topics you have selected. Which will lead to the most interesting paper for you and a target audience: comparing or contrasting the two? Who are you writing for, and why would they want to read your paper? How will you focus your topic enough to cover it in a single paragraph?

Organizing Comparison or Contrast Paragraphs

Katherine decided to write a contrast paragraph and so began with this topic sentence (topics underlined once and limiting statement underlined twice):

> As a homeschooled student through high school, I am finding college to be a very different experience.

When you write your topic sentence for a paragraph on similarities, you might use words like these to compare: *same, similar, alike, resembling, comparable, both,* and *also.* To show differences, try words like *different, unlike, dissimilar, contrasting, opposite, although,* and *whereas.*

Your last major decision before writing a first draft is to pick an overall method of organizing your topics: either block or point-by-point.

- **Block method:** State all your points about one topic, and then midway through your paragraph switch to the other topic and restate the same points, developing each with a few sentences.
- **Point-by-point method:** State each point about each of your two topics as a pair, and then move to the next point, which you will develop with a few sentences. This organization form pairs the two topics so that you can discuss them together before moving to your next point.

Either method can work well for a single-paragraph assignment, but longer essays are usually point-by-point to help readers follow the many points of comparison or contrast.

The following outlines show how this chapter's student models use each method:

POINT BY POINT: "A WAY OF LIFE"

Weather
1. Office worker
2. Railroad worker

Chemicals
1. Office worker
2. Railroad worker

Equipment (most important point)
1. Office worker
2. Railroad worker

BLOCK: "WORLDS APART"

High school
1. Learning on her own
2. Work load
3. Freedom
4. Meeting people (most important point)

College
1. Learning with others
2. Work load
3. Freedom
4. Meeting people (most important point)



Katherine used the block method in "Worlds Apart" (p. 385).



Shane used the point-by-point method in "A Way of Life" (p. 383).

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With both methods of organizing, it is common to arrange major points by **order of importance** (as these chapter models do), though occasionally space and time arrangements can work.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 26.3

Write out your working topic sentence, underlining the topic once and the limiting statement twice. Now, write out your working outline, using either block or point-by-point overall arrangement, including a subtopic sentence for each major point. Are your main points—within the overall arrangement—listed by importance?

FEEDBACK *In groups, discuss the order and importance of each of your subtopic sentences. Does everyone agree on the order? If not, where do you differ?*





After you have outlined your paragraph, take a few minutes to review the list of transitions and other connectors (see pp. 288–289) before you begin drafting.

Drafting Comparison or Contrast Paragraphs

Moving into your first draft, keep the following points in mind:

1. Choose either comparison or contrast, not both.
2. Use either the block or the point-by-point method for overall organization.
3. Include all points for each topic, and develop each point with at least one detailed example.
4. Use transitions and other connectors with care, especially between major points.
5. Write a focused topic sentence, and make some point in your last sentence.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 26.4

After finishing your first rough draft, reread it, highlight your subtopic sentences with a marker or your computer's highlighting feature, and circle any connecting words. Copy your marked subtopic sentences, and ask your instructor to critique them.



FEEDBACK *Exchange drafts with at least one classmate. What parts of his or her draft do you like most and least—and why? Answer in a paragraph. What parts of your own draft did your classmate(s) like most and least?*

Revising Comparison or Contrast Paragraphs

As you begin revising your comparison or contrast first draft, use the following checklist as a guide:

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING COMPARISON OR CONTRAST PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Does your topic sentence name and limit the topics, predicting a comparison or contrast paragraph?
- ☐ Are you consistent with your overall organization: block or point-by-point?
- ☐ Have you included all points for each of your topics?
- ☐ Have you arranged your steps by importance? If not, why?
- ☐ Have you used effective subtopic sentences?
- ☐ Might your target audience need more detailing or explaining, such as comparisons or definitions of unfamiliar terms?
- ☐ Have you used transitions and other connectors, especially in subtopic sentences?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence both rename the topic and make a point?



For more detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.



See Chapter 19 for more on connectors.

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Alternate Assignments

Here are several more comparison or contrast writing options that may interest you. For any of these alternate assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Prewrite on both similarities and differences before choosing either.
- Have a reason for your comparison or contrast; make it clear in your concluding sentence.
- Develop each topic equally with specific words, details, and explanations.
- Use transitions and other connectors.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Comparison or Contrast

1. **Write a paragraph that compares two wildly differing (but relatable) topics,** such as a person with an animal, an object, or a force of nature. When a friend gets angry, do you feel the earth tremble under your feet? Or compare a location, such as your workplace, to an image that shows how you feel about it. If the restaurant where you work seems like a zoo—complete with chattering monkeys, preening peacocks, and lumbering hippos, then you have a topic for your comparison paragraph.
2. **Write a paragraph comparing or contrasting two peoples' management or leadership styles**; you could even be one of them. You might choose bosses, teachers, parents, coaches, ministers, or group leaders of all sorts (tour guides, band leaders, etc.). What is it that you admire or dislike about their styles? If you dislike your boss, contrast him or her with a manager you would like to have. Use examples of the current boss's poor leadership to create contrasting qualities in a more ideal manager.
3. **Write a paragraph that compares or contrasts two cultural events, holidays, or celebrations that you observe—or two celebrations you have attended.** Or compare or contrast these two photographs (p. 392). In how many ways do these two birthday celebrations seem similar; in how many

are they different? After you have brainstormed a list of similarities and differences, consider what your point might be.





4. **Compare or contrast the two images (of American football and soccer) on page 381.** Alternately, you could contrast the two sports using one of the focused topic sentences, also on page 381.



ACTIVITY 26.5 WORKING ONLINE: *Comparing Two Songs*

Pandora is a free site where you can discover new music based on bands or songs you already like. Visit http://www.pandora.com and type in the name of a song you know well; then note the first song Pandora plays for you on that "station." Write a paragraph comparing or contrasting this new song with the one you named. Note whether you were already familiar with the recommendation and whether or not you like it.



ACTIVITY 26.6 WORKING ONLINE: *Comparison/Contrast Review*

Take the Chapter 26 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Linking to Future Experience

You will find yourself comparing and contrasting within other patterns and in assignments across the curriculum. When writing a definition paragraph, try contrasting various definitions of a word. And when writing persuasively, explore what is similar between two seemingly opposite points of view. In a music history class, you could be asked to identify key differences between Romantic and Classical composers or to note what's similar in two pieces of music written 400 years apart. In a web design class, you might need to name differences among various platforms or browsers. An economics assignment might ask you to compare the likelihoods of various stocks rising under certain circumstances. Writing about similarities and differences will help you better understand relationships between concepts and better express them in upcoming papers and exams.



For more on definition, see Chapter 28, and for more on persuasion, see Chapter 29.

Chapter Summary

1. Comparison and contrast are the discovering of similarities and differences between two people, places, events, objects, or ideas.
2. Using comparison and contrast, we explore and evaluate unfamiliar things in the light of those we know.
3. Comparison should be meaningful and interesting and made between two topics that are similar enough to be compared.
4. Block and point-by-point are two overall arrangement patterns for comparison and contrast.
5. Transitional words and other connectors help readers move from one topic to another.
6. Points are frequently arranged by order of importance but occasionally by time or space.
7. Subtopic sentences help readers shift from one main point to the next.
8. The topic sentence should name and focus the topic and predict either a comparison or a contrast.
9. The concluding sentence should begin with a connector, link to the topic sentence, and make a point.
10. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

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Creating and Explaining Groups (Classification) 27

[*Have you ever had to plan a major move? How did you organize your belongings? Consider how your system (or lack thereof) affected the ease of unpacking. How is this process similar to writing?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in classifying
  - Using a single organizing principle
  - Choosing an organizing principle
  - Developing topics
  - Completing the group
- Learning from a student model
- Writing a classification paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

Here is an image that most of us are familiar with—moving day. After much work the couple rests for a few minutes before plunging into the next phase, the unpacking. Where will they put all their belongings, and what will they do with all those boxes? In preparation for this move, the couple labeled each box according to the room ("Kitchen," "Living Room," and so forth) where its contents will go, and each box was then placed in that space. In doing this, they chose a **single organizing principle (SOP)**, **classifying** (or grouping) by rooms, to sort their possessions; this will make unpacking far easier than if they had just jumbled everything into random boxes and stacked them all in one room.

In this chapter we will practice the same principle: grouping things according to a SOP and then developing our groups with detailed explanations and specific examples.



A **single organizing principle**, or **SOP**, is the method used to classify things.

Linking to Previous Experience

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What You Already Know about Classifying

We group things every day, seldom paying much attention to the process. When we shop, for example, merchandise is organized into labeled groups, and we find items we need by category: spices and baking goods in one aisle, paper towels and napkins in another. At home, also, we group many things: our clothes, music, sports equipment, kitchen utensils, and so forth. To find our way around places, we rely on classifying: in a city, to find sections (uptown or downtown) and then neighborhoods (Morningside Heights or Washington Heights) and finally individual residences; in an airport, to find the right terminal and gate; at a college, to find the right building, floor, and classroom. Separating items into groups based on a SOP helps us arrange our lives and solve many problems.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 27.1

Tell about something you have classified, and include the SOP. For instance, if you organize your music into categories like classic rock, metal, and hip-hop, your SOP would be musical style, not year of release or artist. What was your purpose in using this method of classification, and how has this way of grouping made your life easier?



For ideas, skim the topic list on pp. 401–402 under "Discovering Ideas."

Developing Skills in Classifying

The following activities will help you work with classifying:

1. Using a single organizing principle
2. Choosing an organizing principle
3. Developing topics
4. Completing the group



Using a Single Organizing Principle

As discussed, to arrange items logically, we must have a reason for grouping them, or a **single organizing principle (SOP)**. In this photograph, how is the food organized? What is the menu's SOP? How do *you* find food items on a menu? To begin with a cup of soup, you would likely look at the appetizer section, and for a piece of pie, you would turn to desserts. The SOP of the usual order of food presentation is important because it helps you find what you want.

ACTIVITY 27.1 Using a Single Organizing Principle

The topics below are grouped by a single organizing principle. Write out the SOP in the space provided, and then place an X by the item in each group that does not belong.

EXAMPLE:

Topic: movies

Groups: ___*The Incredibles* ___*The Last Mimsy* _X_ *The Bourne Ultimatum* ___*Cars* ___*Over the Hedge*

SOP: *children's films*

1. **Topic:** weather

   Groups: ___ tornadoes ___hurricanes ___blizzards ___thunderstorms ___winter

   SOP: _____

2. **Topic:** shoes

   Groups: ___running ___hiking ___ Reeboks ___dance ___work

   SOP: _____

3. **Topic:** art forms

   Groups: ___paintings ___sculptures ___drawings ___watercolors ___pottery

   SOP: _____

4. **Topic:** energy sources

   Groups:____oil ___solar ___geothermal ___hydroelectric ___wind

   SOP: _____

5. **Topic:** animals

   Groups: ___dogs ___cats ___whales ___apes ___iguanas

   SOP: _____

Choosing an Organizing Principle

Sometimes the reason for grouping things is clear to just about everyone. For instance, the system of rating films as G, PG, PG-13, and so on, depends largely on the level of sex, violence, and other "adult" themes. However, films can be classified in many other ways: by genre (comedy, action, romance, sci-fi, etc.), how much money they make, how much cultural impact they have, or even how well a person likes them. When you choose a topic, you may find that the SOP you apply to it depends on what you want to say about it and what you think an audience might want to hear.

ACTIVITY 27.2 WORKING TOGETHER: *Choosing an Organizing Principle*



Discuss with group members what kind of SOPs might be used for the topics below, and then write three possible SOPs for each.

EXAMPLE:

Topic: vacations

Possible organizing principles: a. expense
b. place c. level of activity

1. **Topic:** tools
   Possible organizing principles: a. _____
   b. _____ c. _____
2. **Topic:** parties
   Possible organizing principles: a. _____
   b. _____ c. _____
3. **Topic:** TV commercials
   Possible organizing principles: a. _____
   b. _____ c. _____
4. **Topic:** animals
   Possible organizing principles: a. _____
   b. _____ c. _____

Developing Topics

After you have chosen a topic and a SOP, you will then list three or four groups, developing them with detailed explanations and specific examples. For instance, choosing the topic of vacations from Activity 27.2, we might next list as a SOP "level of activity" and then develop three categories for it:

Level-of-Activity Categories for Vacations

1. **Intense action:** ski vacation—racing down the slopes at Copper Mountain all day, eating out and partying at night, collapsing into bed late, and then hitting the slopes early the next morning
2. **Moderate action:** beach—lying in the sun on Padre Island with a cooler full of beverages at hand, slipping into the water from time to time to cool down, swimming a few strokes and then rocking with the waves

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3. **Little action:** cruise—resting in a lounge chair on deck 10 of a Norwegian cruise ship, watching the sun set in the Atlantic, thinking about going for that fourth meal of the day and then later falling into a whirlpool to relax for an early bedtime, planning on sleeping late

ACTIVITY 27.3 *Developing Topics*

The following student-model paragraph classifies Ukrainian holidays based on the SOP of time, that is, when the holidays became part of the writer's cultural traditions. Under each major grouping (underlined in a subtopic sentence), note how the author has developed his points, and then write out several specific examples, details, and explanation the author has used.

Ukrainian Holidays

Ukrainian holidays, like those in most nations, did not all appear on the same day; they have come into the culture over many years. One of the oldest festivals in Ukraine is called Ivana Kupala, celebrated on July 7, a holiday for people to enjoy nature and water. People gather to picnic, swim in rivers, and build huge bonfires. Girls make flower garlands for their hair and sometimes float them in rivers to predict their fortunes in the coming year. To cleanse themselves for the year, people jump over the bonfires. The tradition began thousands of years ago when people believed that if they bathed in the river, as the sun god did, they would be purified. As time passed, Ukrainians started celebrating Christian holidays such as Christmas and Easter. In Ukraine, Christmas is observed according to an older calendar on January 7. Traditionally on Christmas Eve, children would bring food to treat their parents; now the whole family gets together for a cozy dinner. From 1918 to 1991, Ukraine was part of the USSR, which banned religious holidays and made civil holidays more important. For one such holiday, New Year's Eve, people gather for an all-night party. At midnight everyone greets the new year with fireworks and laughter. The most recent holidays began when Ukraine gained freedom from the Soviet Union. One of the most important of these is Independence Day, celebrated on August 24. The central streets of Kiev are closed to traffic, and bands appear on the square of the capital. This festival ends with colorful fireworks. Holidays, like those in Ukraine, reflect the culture of a people and are an important way to celebrate what matters most in their lives.

—Sergey Kobzar

1. Examples, details, and explanation for Ivana Kupala:

_____

2. Examples, details, and explanation for Christian holidays:

_____

3. Examples, details, and explanation for civil holidays:

_____

4. Examples, details, and explanation for most recent holidays:

_____

Completing the Group

There are topics to classify that are so familiar to people that they anticipate the writer's groupings. For instance, most people are aware of the major food groups and would wonder why a writer left out dairy products. If you choose a topic that is clearly "pre"-classified, be sure to include all members of the group.

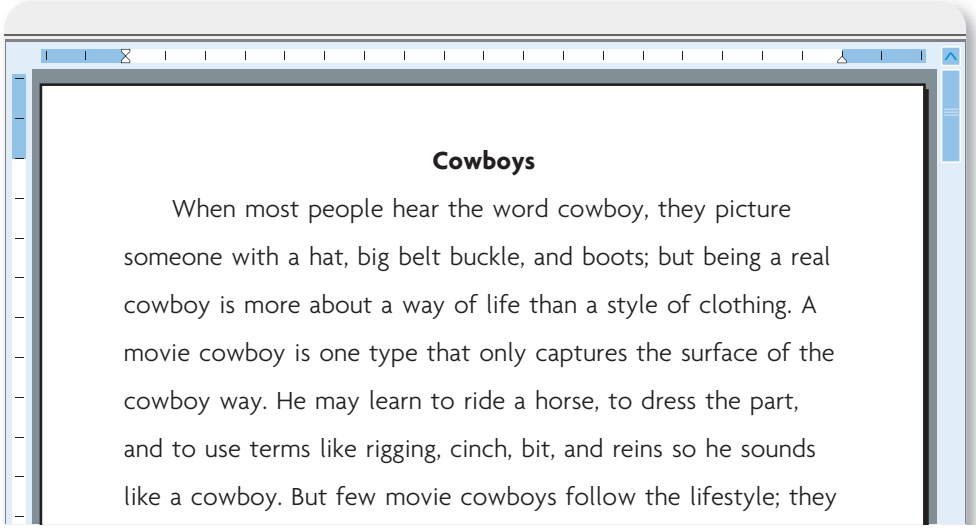
ACTIVITY 27.4 *Completing the Group*

Fill in the blanks to complete each list.

1. Fossil fuels: oil, natural gas, _____.
2. Common big cats: lion, leopard, jaguar, cheetah, panther, _____.
3. Common jewelry: rings, bracelets, earrings, brooches, _____.
4. Planets: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, _____.
5. Hawaiian islands: Maui, Oahu, Kauai, Molokai, Lanai, _____ _____.

Learning from a Student Model: A Classification Paragraph

The following paragraph of classification will help you understand how to write your own. Read it closely for organizational points (topic, subtopic, and concluding sentences and connectors) and development (detailed explanations and specific examples). In which group, if any, do you think the student writer of this paragraph includes himself—and why?



Cowboys

When most people hear the word cowboy, they picture someone with a hat, big belt buckle, and boots; but being a real cowboy is more about a way of life than a style of clothing. A movie cowboy is one type that only captures the surface of the cowboy way. He may learn to ride a horse, to dress the part, and to use terms like rigging, cinch, bit, and reins so he sounds like a cowboy. But few movie cowboys follow the lifestyle; they

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do not saddle, feed, or otherwise care for their horses. Another imitation type is the "Coca-Cola cowboy," who knows little about being a cowboy but wants to pass as the real thing. This type has no affiliation with livestock. He can be found sitting in hardware stores or coffee shops, telling stories he has heard or read, pretending they happened to him. Yes, these "cowboys" know the right lingo, but they mostly care about the clothes: shiny boots and new jeans, new shirts, and new hats. They drive spotless new trucks with big mud tires and stickers like "Save the Horse, Ride a Cowboy." The last kind of cowboy is the real cowboy, one who has spent his life around horses and cattle. He does not wear shiny boots. He works hard, long days, so his clothes are functional. In the summer he wears a mesh or straw hat; in the winter, a warm hat covers his ears. A real cowboy's job depends on his horses, so he takes good care of them. When they need to be shod, he often does it himself. A real cowboy does chores that imitation cowboys don't, like repairing fences, driving a tractor, and even sewing. In fact, a real cowboy can more than just handle the world he lives in—he takes pride in his work, feels a part of the land, and loves his way of life.

—Billy Higgins



THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence? What is the writer's SOP?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What points does Billy make in his last sentence?
4. What three groups of "cowboys" does the author discuss? Which group might the cowboy pictured here belong to? What makes you think so?

5. Copy each subtopic sentence, underlining the main group (example) once and the statement about it twice. Circle the connectors: transitions, repeat words, synonyms, and pronouns.
6. Which group do you think the author describes best—and why?
7. Tell how several specific words make any part of Billy's explanation clearer.
8. Why do you think the author uses the phrase "the real thing" when discussing the Coca-Cola cowboy? Do you think the phrase is well chosen? Why?
9. Name three ways to further develop any major point in this paragraph. Consider active verbs, specific words, sensory details, revealing thoughts and emotions, comparisons or contrasts, and further explanation.



For more on connectors, see Chapter 19.

Writing a Classification Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that divides a topic into three or four groups and then discusses those groups. In order to remain focused, you must choose a SOP, which you will state in your topic sentence.



Be sure to introduce each grouping with a subtopic sentence and to end with a concluding sentence that makes a point.

Audience and Purpose

Consider who might be interested in your classification. Sergey Kobzar (whose paragraph is shown in Activity 27.3) wanted to explain a bit about his homeland of Ukraine to his classmates. Knowing who he was writing for guided Sergey in defining terms like *Ivana Kupala* and explaining some of the history of Ukraine. Billy Higgins (author of the other chapter model) expected his classmates to be familiar with terms like *reins* and *bit* and to understand his references to hardware stores, pickups with big mud tires, and even the Coke marketing slogan "It's the real thing." Your writing will be easier and more focused if you think about your reader even before you begin drafting.

Your main purpose is to communicate information, but you may do so in a way that entertains. Your paragraph may also move people to think differently about your topic or to take some action.



For more on describing an audience, see Chapter 1. Remember that your instructor is your secondary audience.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Classification Paragraphs

Pointless classifications will probably be an awful chore for you to write and your audience to read. So choose a topic you are interested in and have something to say about. If, for instance, you have been job searching recently or are working in college toward a career goal, you might choose to classify types of jobs that you would like or perhaps ones that you wish to avoid. Choosing a topic and then prewriting will help you decide on a SOP, and so a focus for your work.

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR CLASSIFICATION

1. **People:** movie stars, athletes, family members, significant others, coaches, teachers, employers, church leaders, politicians, criminals, soldiers, winners, losers, leaders

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See Chapter 1 for more on prewriting methods (freewriting, clustering, listing, and so forth).

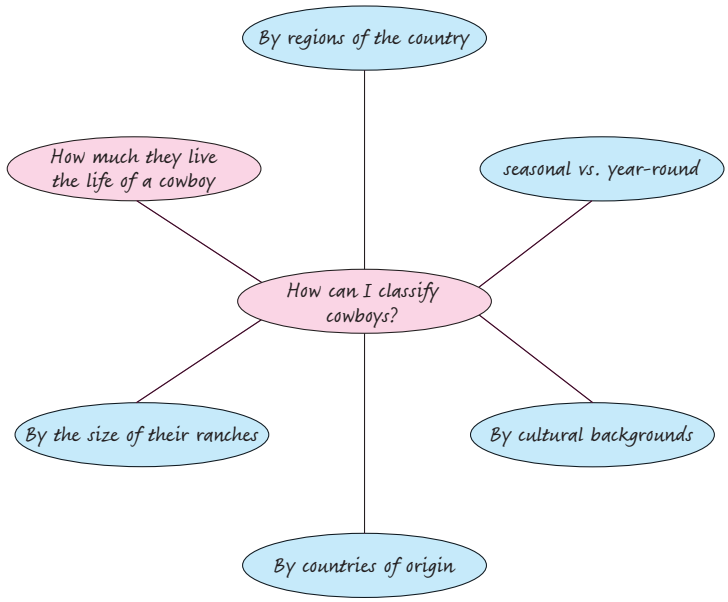


This topic list should give you some good ideas to choose from.

2. **Places:** restaurants, homes, gyms, amusement parks, zoos, vacation spots, cities, sports arenas, national parks, city parks, wilderness areas, libraries, schools
3. **Events:** concerts, dances, dates, graduations, sports, political rallies, speeches, memorials, marriages, funerals, births, roasts, vacations, hospital emergencies
4. **Things:** cars, motorcycles, video games, movies, music, books, computers, search engines, blogs, weapons, musical instruments, works of art
5. **Animals:** pets, wild animals, domesticated farm animals, carnivores, herbivores, omnivores, marine mammals, gliding animals, flying animals, extinct animals, mythological or fantasy-inspired animals
6. **Groups:** sports teams, hunters, anglers, bands, choirs, youth groups, bicycle clubs, motorcycle clubs, subcultures (Goths, punks, skateboarders, gamers), friends
7. **Work:** good, bad, part-time, career jobs; chores (household work, car maintenance, care of children or pets); volunteer (PTA, church, sports)
8. **Concepts:** political systems, counterculture, winning, losing, vegetarianism, environmentalism, recycling, sex appeal, peer pressure, reality TV, global warming
9. **Services:** auto repair, employment, moving, dating, pest control, get-rich-quick schemes, landscaping, house painting, travel, counseling
10. **Educational stages:** preschool, kindergarten, elementary, high school, college; other learning experiences (fishing, skateboarding, dating, fighting, riding a subway)

Clustering is one prewriting method that can help to uncover a SOP. Here's how a cluster for the student model "Cowboys" might look:

PREWRITING CLUSTER FOCUSED ON CHOOSING A SOP



If the author of "Cowboys" had wanted to classify using any of the shown focus points as a SOP, he could have. For example, he could have chosen cowboys of different countries and discussed American, Canadian, Mexican, and Brazilian cowboys. Instead, Billy went with how closely people live the life of a cowboy. With this focus point he was able to brainstorm for the three groups he eventually discussed: movie cowboys, Coca-Cola cowboys, and real cowboys.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 27.2

Follow the clustering example on the previous page to discover several possible SOPs for your topic, choose the one that most interests you, and tell why it does. Next, tell who might be interested in your topic and approach.

FEEDBACK *In pairs or groups, share clusters, and discuss why each topic does or does not interest you. How might each of you make your idea more appealing? Offer and consider advice graciously, and take notes.*



Organizing Classification Paragraphs

When you have chosen your SOP and several groups to discuss, you should then decide how to organize your groups. You might choose a chronological arrangement, as Sergey Kobzar does in "Ukrainian Holidays" (p. 398); a spatial arrangement, for instance in describing how merchandise is grouped in a store; or order of importance, as Billy Higgins does in "Cowboys" (p. 399), saving his most important group for last.

Next, write out your topic sentence, which should include your topic and SOP. You may directly state that you are classifying by using words like *groups*, *types*, *kinds*, *sorts*, and *varieties* or simply imply that a classification is on the way. Notice how the author of "Cowboys" wrote his topic sentence (topic underlined once and SOP underlined twice):

> When people hear the word *cowboy*, they often picture a person with a hat, big belt buckle, and boots; but being a real cowboy has more to do with a way of life than a style of clothing.

Here is another version of this topic sentence, using a grouping word:

> When people hear the word *cowboy*, they often picture a person with a hat, big belt buckle, and boots; but I see cowboys as belonging to groups, based not on their clothing style but on their lifestyle.

With a topic sentence in hand and your groups arranged, you are almost ready to draft.



Before you begin your draft, review the list of transitions and other connectors (pp. 288–289).

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 27.3

Write out your working topic sentence, underlining the topic once and the SOP twice. Next, list your categories in the order you have chosen, and name that order (time, space, or importance). Why do you think this is a good arrangement for your topic?

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Drafting Classification Paragraphs

Moving into your first draft, keep the following points in mind:

1. Use your SOP to effectively classify your topic.
2. Be sure your paper makes a point (often made clear in the last sentence).
3. Introduce each group with a subtopic sentence.
4. Develop each group with detailed examples, specific words, and thorough explanations (which include defining terms where needed).
5. Use transitions and other connectors with care, especially between groups.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 27.4



After finishing your first rough draft, reread it, highlight your subtopic sentences with a marker or your word-processing software's highlighting feature, and circle or box any connecting words. Now, write out or type your marked subtopic sentences to turn in to your instructor. What parts of your draft do you like most and least—and why? Answer in a paragraph.

FEEDBACK *Trade drafts with a partner, and offer feedback on his or her use of subtopic sentences and connecting words.*

Revising Classification Paragraphs

HINT

For more detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.

As you begin revising your classification first draft, use the following checklist as a guide:

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING CLASSIFICATION PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Does your topic sentence name a topic and a SOP? Does it also (this is optional) forecast your main categories?
- ☐ Is your paragraph's organization consistent: by space, time, or importance?
- ☐ Have you used subtopic sentences effectively?
- ☐ Have you avoided categories that overlap? If a group drifts from the SOP, drop it—or add it to one of your other groups.
- ☐ What more detailing or explaining might your target audience need? Have you included comparisons and definitions of unfamiliar terms?
- ☐ Have you used transitions and other connectors, especially in subtopic sentences?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence rename the topic and make a point?

HINT

Practice avoiding categories that overlap in Activity 27.1.

Alternate Assignments

Here are several classification writing options that may be of interest. For any of these alternate assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Establish a SOP that includes all logical groupings.
- State the SOP in your topic sentence.
- Begin each grouping with a subtopic sentence.
- End with a concluding sentence that makes a point about your topic.
- Use transitions and other connectors.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Classification

1. **Describe or improve a classifying system at your job.** All retail stores group merchandise so that customers can find (and buy) it. Tell how part of your store is arranged. For example, using a SOP of easy customer access, you might describe how part or all of a Quick Trip is arranged: impulse items like cigarette lighters, LED lights, and candy close to the register; drinks like sodas, coffee, and hot chocolate perhaps grouped toward the middle of the store; and all cold items placed in the coolers against the walls. Alternately, you might describe in more detail a small section of the store, say, concentrating on the register area. Perhaps you can tell how to improve the arrangement so that you can work more efficiently (using "efficiency" as the SOP). Your boss might be a good audience for this one.



2. **Classify immigrants in this country.** The United States has often welcomed immigrants into this nation (sometimes not) and is often called a "melting pot" of people from all over the world. But with immigration come questions and sometimes conflict: who should be admitted, how many should be allowed in, what skills should they possess, how can they contribute to the country? Using the accompanying photographs to help get you thinking about immigration, decide on a SOP first. You might group immigrants according to nationality, skill levels, refugee status, historical arrival, use of social services, contributions to the country, and other ways. If you have a position on the issue of immigration into the United States, this paper might have a persuasive goal.



3. WRITE A CLASSIFICATION PAPER THAT DEALS WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE.



For example, how many ways are there for the average person to reduce pollution? Inside a household we use electric lights, air conditioners, furnaces, washers, dryers, ovens, water heaters, other appliances, and many electronic devices for entertainment. Outside our homes we use lawnmowers, trimmers, leaf blowers, snow blowers, and then, of course, fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides on our lawns. We send massive amounts

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of waste to landfills. You could classify these pollutants based on how harmful each is or by which is easiest to reduce, two possible SOPs. Your goal may be simply to inform your reader, or you may wish to move him or her to some action. ●



ACTIVITY 27.5 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Classifying Music***

Go to http://blog.frivolousmotion.com/2007/03/how-to-organize-your-music-part-1.html and read Frivolous Motion's suggestion for how to organize music by rating it; at the end of the post, click on "Part 2" for this same blogger's advice on organizing by genre. Which approach appeals to you more? Whether you prefer mp3s, CDs, or vinyl, how do you classify your music? Do you organize by genre, alphabetically, or with another SOP? If you have iTunes or a similar mp3 library on your computer, you can click on various category heads to organize your music by different SOPs; do you organize by album, song, or artist—or by some combination of these? In a paragraph, describe your classification method for music, listing both the categories and the SOP; recommend your system to others, as Frivolous Motion does.



ACTIVITY 27.6 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Classification Review***

Take the Chapter 27 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Linking to Future Experience

Classifying is a technique that can help you organize ideas in many writing situations. Whether you are discussing chemical elements, works of literature, or traffic violations, dividing a broad subject area into groups makes it easier to understand and manage. In a longer paper, classifying may help you compare or contrast within or among groups. You might use classification to define concepts by showing what fits (and doesn't fit) a description. And you might strengthen your case in a persuasive paper by classifying evidence.

Chapter Summary

1. Classification groups things by a single organizing principle (SOP).
2. We classify information, people, places, events, and objects to simplify our lives, making these things easier to understand and work with.
3. Writers choose a SOP based on the topic, their interest in it, and a reader's potential interest.
4. Classification should include all obvious groups within a topic without overlapping or creating an endless list.
5. Writers should always have a reason for classifying.
6. Classifications can be organized by time, space, or importance.
7. Each category should be introduced with a subtopic sentence.

8. Each category should be developed with detailed examples and explanations, based on how much the reader is likely to know about the topic.
9. Transitional words and other connectors help readers move from one group to another.
10. The concluding sentence should begin with a connector, link to the topic sentence, and make a point.
11. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

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Defining Terms (Definition)

28

[*Do you have a favorite game? Is it a team (or group) activity, a one-on-one competition, or a solitary diversion? What specific qualities distinguish a game from other hobbies or forms of entertainment?*]





KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in defining
  - Defining by negation
  - Defining with comparisons
  - Using formal definitions
  - Using extended definitions
- Learning from a student model
- Writing a definition paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

Even a simple word like *game* has many different meanings—an organized sporting event, a leisure activity, something trivial or purely fun, people's interactions in social situations like dating, and others. If someone asked what you meant by *game*, how might the pictures on the previous page—people playing cards and baseball—help you explain the word? If by *game* you meant a competitive leisure activity with rules, you might use the card game as an example to help illustrate your meaning. Using examples is one form of definition.

Working through Chapter 28, you will practice various forms of definition, including brief definitions. To explore the meaning of a word or concept, you will continue to use other patterns of development (such as description and illustration). You will have successfully defined a term when you have touched on its essential nature, explaining its meaning fully for a specific purpose.



See p. 418 in this chapter for more on how specific patterns of development can be used to define.

Linking to Previous Experience

What You Already Know about Defining

Defining is such a natural act that we seldom notice we're doing it. Whenever we teach or inform others about something we know about—an idea, object, animal, place, or person—we are **defining** it. We can use many patterns of development, such as description, to help us define. For example, to define a wheaten terrier, you could describe it with details: *size:* 30 to 50 pounds; *fur:* 6 inches long and golden brown to pale wheat; *face:* terrier chin whiskers; *tail*: cropped short; *personality*: high energy, spunky, playful. You might tell a story about your own wheaten terrier (who follows you around the house, dropping a red ball at your feet), give a comparison (he looks like a taller version of Disney's Benjy), or talk about the effects the dog has on your household.



For more on description, see Chapter 21. For narration techniques, see Chapter 22. Comparison and contrast are covered in Chapter 26; cause and effect, in Chapter 24.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 28.1

Choose a term, and define it in a brief paragraph. Choose a topic you know well. If you enjoy the video game *Guitar Hero*, try to define it. If you like reptiles, define an anaconda. If you are a parent, define what *tantrum* or *fatherhood* means to you. What patterns of development are you using? Was a dictionary definition useful? Did you have to explain any unfamiliar words?

FEEDBACK *In groups, share your topics. Everyone in the group should try, in a few sentences, to define what each word means to them. How do your definitions of the same words differ?*



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Developing Skills in Defining

The following activities will help you work with defining:

1. Using brief definitions
   a. Negation ("not that, but this")
   b. Comparisons (metaphors and similes)
   c. Formal (grouping and detailing)
2. Using extended definitions: patterns of development (description, narration, etc.)

Defining by Negation



[Using negation, offer another definition of McDonald's; or define a local restaurant using this same technique.]

Our first brief definition is **negation**, which means saying what something is *not* and then telling what it *is*—or what you *mean* it to be. For instance, if you were arguing for the importance of McDonald's in the nation's history, you might say, "McDonald's is not just another hamburger joint; it is the ancestor from which the fast-food industry has evolved." Or you might have had some negative experiences with dating and want to show your attitude with this sentence of negation: "Dating is not so much about finding a best friend or future spouse; it is more about losing self-illusions and finding out too much about another person." Negation is useful for clarifying your slant on a topic or issue and may be useful in a topic sentence.

ACTIVITY 28.1 *Defining by Negation*

Using a dictionary or your own knowledge, write a one- or two-sentence definition by negation for the following terms.

EXAMPLE: Library: *Today's big-city libraries are no longer just places to store a lot of books; these institutions are dynamic places of learning and fun that offer music, movies, Internet access, and community programs; libraries are the gateway to another, richer world.*

1. Mother: _____

2. Coach: _____

3. Interstate highways: _____

4. Divorce: _____

_____

5. Tattoos: _____

_____

Defining with Comparisons (Metaphor/Simile)

As we learned in Chapter 26, comparisons help people understand ideas. **Literal comparisons** are valuable, that is, comparing two things as similar as possible, one which readers don't know and one which they do. For example, we could compare a hiker's backpack to a duffle bag with straps, carried on the back. However, if we were to create a **metaphor** or **simile**, we would be combining *unlike* images to further a reader's understanding. Now we might say that a hiker's backpack is his or her home, containing all the food, shelter, and other supplies a person needs to survive in comfort in the wild. Here we have compared the unlike images of a *backpack* and a *home*, trying to help readers see how important the backpack can be.

When we say one thing *is* another (my backpack *is* a home), we have a **metaphor**. Saying one thing is *like* (my backpack is *like* a home) is a **simile**. In creating a metaphor or simile, try to avoid phrases (images) that you hear often. These common phrases are usually **clichés**, worn-out images that writers should avoid.

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ACTIVITY 28.2 Defining with Comparisons

In a sentence, create a brief metaphor or simile for the following terms.

EXAMPLE: The alpine lakes were *the ice-blue eyes of the mountain.*

1. Zoos are _____

_____

2. Diving from a high dive is like_____

_____

3. A sexist person is _____

_____

4. My dog is _____

_____

5. Electric cars are _____

_____

Using Formal (Dictionary) Definitions

A dictionary can also help add meaning to a word by showing its **formal definition**. To write a formal definition, we limit our term to one group and then add detailed examples and explanations that further identify the word. Notice below the three parts to a formal definition:

TERM	GROUP	DETAILED EXAMPLES/EXPLANATIONS
Chinchilla	rodent	squirrel-like creature native to South America, raised in captivity for its soft, pale-gray fur
Baseball	game	played with a ball and bat by two teams of nine players, each team playing alternately in the field and at bat; to score, the players at bat have to run a course of four bases laid out in a diamond pattern



The bull's eye on p. 309 illustrates the range of general and specific language.

We have been practicing this type of defining since working with description and specific language in Chapter 21. As words become more specific—that is, as the group they belong to shrinks—they become increasingly defined.

Verbs like *is* or *means* are useful in a formal definition because they link the term with its group and details—for example, "A chinchilla *is* a rodent from South America."

When writing formal definitions, be sure to avoid these two common problems:

1. **Vague, general groups and details:**
   - We could say that a chinchilla is an *animal* or even a *thing*, but these broad words don't help us limit the group the way *rodent* does.
   - If we said that a chinchilla is a *furry rodent* but left out further descriptions, such as *from South America,* we might be talking about a squirrel.
2. ***Where* and *when* replacing categories:**
   - You keep important information from a reader if you replace grouping words with *when* or *where.* Instead of writing "Baseball is *where* people form teams of nine players and . . . ," try "Baseball is a *game played with teams of nine players. . . .*"



When translating definitions from your native language, make sure they make sense in English.

ACTIVITY 28.3 *Formal (Dictionary) Definitions*

Using a dictionary, write out a one-sentence formal definition for each of the following terms. Underline each term's group, and include detailed examples and explanations. Is the dictionary definition enough for you to understand each term? Why or why not?

EXAMPLE: Carabiner: *A carabiner is an oblong metal ring with a spring clip, used in mountaineering to attach a running rope to a piton or similar device.*

Term clarified? *Yes, but mostly because I have seen carabiners used and even have one on my backpack. The explanation with the rope helped because I've seen mountain climbers on TV.*

1. Agouti: _____

   _____

   Term clarified? _____
2. Senate: _____

   _____

   Term clarified? _____
3. Meteor: _____

   _____

Term clarified? _____

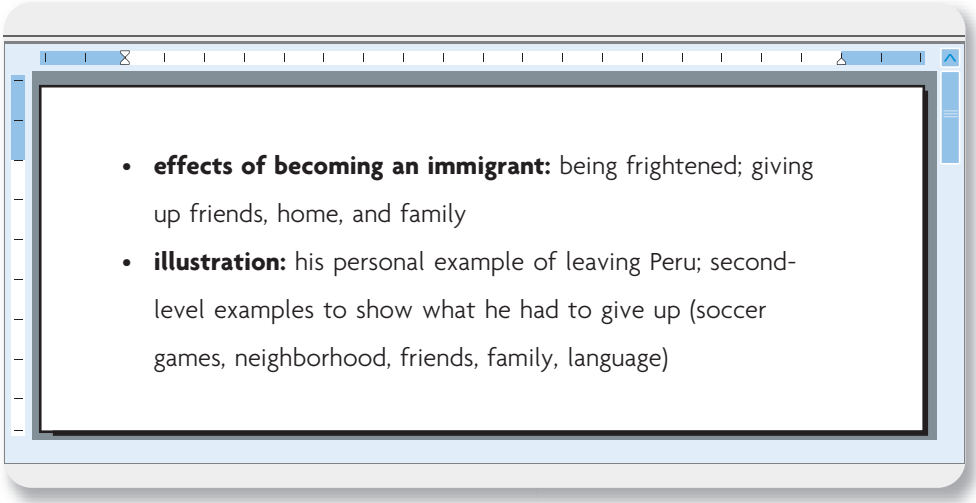
4. Beatles: _____

_____

Term clarified? _____

Using Extended Definitions: Patterns of Development

While brief definitions are useful for developing a topic, the patterns of development (PODs) are even more helpful. Because they mirror the way people think, they are a comfortable and natural way of adding meaning to an idea. Notice how the student author Jhonnatan Percca develops his definition paragraph, using several brief definitions and then these patterns in his first major example:



- **effects of becoming an immigrant:** being frightened; giving up friends, home, and family
- **illustration:** his personal example of leaving Peru; second-level examples to show what he had to give up (soccer games, neighborhood, friends, family, language)



When writing, you most often use PODs unconsciously. As you become aware of and practice them a bit, however, they can help you find interesting ways to develop your ideas.

ACTIVITY 28.4 WORKING TOGETHER: *Using Patterns of Development*



Ask one group member to read aloud the following student model while others follow along in the text. Notice the three major examples in the underlined subtopic sentences: self-sacrifice, loneliness, and explorers. Discuss which of the PODs the author used to develop examples 2 and 3, and write these in the space provided. Next, discuss and comment on the work. Has the author explained the term *immigrant* in a way that helps you better understand it? If so, how?



Explorers: Searching for a Better Life

Dictionary.com says that immigrants are persons "who migrate to another country, usually seeking permanent residence," but this says little about people brave enough to leave their whole world behind. First, to be an immigrant, a person has to be willing to sacrifice much. When I thought about leaving Peru, I was frightened, knowing I would have to give up many things: my familiar neighborhood, my loved ones, soccer games with friends, even my language. The many letters I write home are not enough to ease the pain inside my heart, and I still struggle to make people understand me in English. Immigrants must also be able to bear the loneliness of their new country. I miss my friends and family. Sometimes I feel as if I have fallen to the bottom of a well.

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Choose from the following possible PODs: description, narration, illustration, causes/effects, process analysis (how something works), classification, comparison/contrast.

From the darkness and cold at the bottom, I look up to see my grandparents, parents, brothers, and sisters leaning over, calling down to me, "Jhonnatan, come home to us." I have made friends here, like Carlos, from Mexico City, but he is also lonely, missing his wife and son. One of the most important parts of being an immigrant is becoming an explorer. When I arrived in New York City, I felt as if I was trapped in a forest of cement trees. Finding my way around was confusing because the places I needed to go were far apart, and the stores were so big. Often I got lost but managed to find my way back despite my poor English, asking for directions, reading street maps, and learning the subway system. To stay on the path that leads to a better life, immigrants must be ready to sacrifice much, willing to endure loneliness, and courageous enough to explore their new world.

—*Jhonnatan Percca*

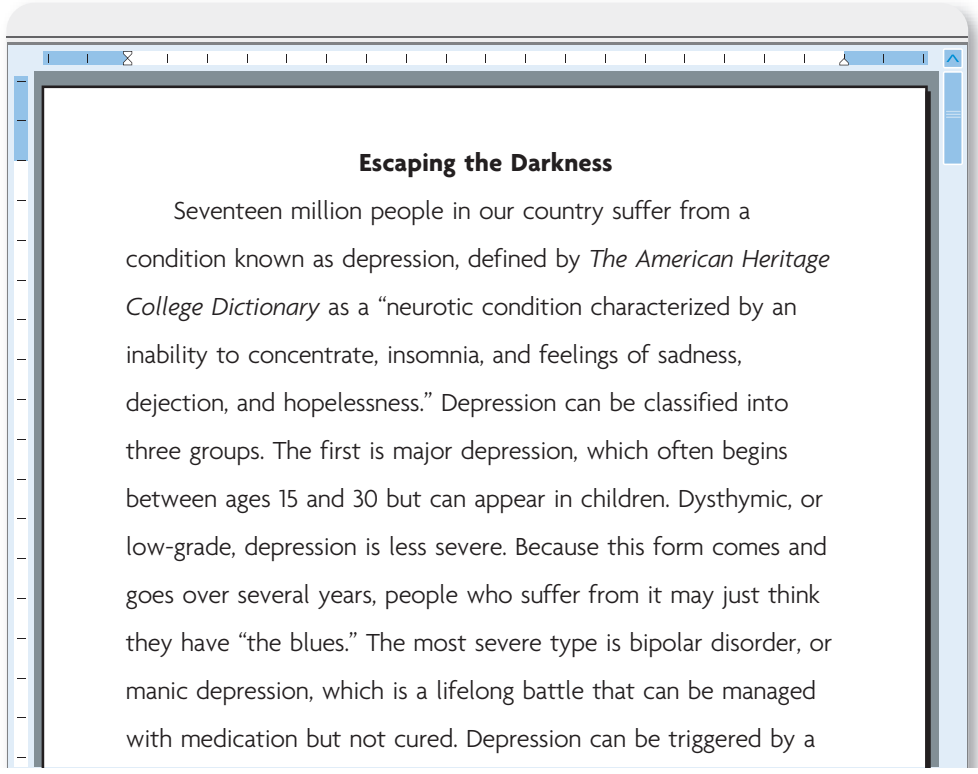
1. PODs for example 2, loneliness:_____

   How effective is the explanation? _____
2. PODs for example 3, explorers: _____

   How effective is the explanation? _____

Learning from a Student Model: An Extended Definition Paragraph

The following paragraph, which defines *depression,* will help you understand how to write your extended definition paragraph. Read the model closely for organizational points (topic, subtopic, and concluding sentences and connectors) and development (detailed explanations and specific examples). Try to find brief definitions of negation, metaphor/simile, and dictionary, and look for the mix of PODs.



Escaping the Darkness

Seventeen million people in our country suffer from a condition known as depression, defined by *The American Heritage College Dictionary* as a "neurotic condition characterized by an inability to concentrate, insomnia, and feelings of sadness, dejection, and hopelessness." Depression can be classified into three groups. The first is major depression, which often begins between ages 15 and 30 but can appear in children. Dysthymic, or low-grade, depression is less severe. Because this form comes and goes over several years, people who suffer from it may just think they have "the blues." The most severe type is bipolar disorder, or manic depression, which is a lifelong battle that can be managed with medication but not cured. Depression can be triggered by a

stressful event, such as the death of a loved one, or simply by a hormone imbalance in the brain. The causes may not always be obvious, but the symptoms are well-known. They may include sadness, lack of interest in activities, loss of appetite or energy, insomnia, feelings of worthlessness, and even suicidal thoughts. Although depression can be life-threatening, it is treatable. One treatment uses antidepressants like Prozac and Zoloft to help stabilize neurotransmitters, or brain chemicals. Along with medication, counseling is often used to help patients develop coping mechanisms and uncover events that trigger depression. Daily exercise can help by stimulating the production of serotonin, a hormone that gives the body energy and makes people feel better. Although some think that clinically depressed people can "just snap out of it" if they try, this is not the case: depressed people need treatment to overcome their illness. When the door to the outside world closes, leaving them in darkness, those suffering from depression may need help to open that door and come back into the light.

—Cynthia Urlocker

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What point does Cynthia make in her last sentence?
4. What three major points does the author give about depression, and what do we call the sentences in which they are introduced?
5. Each of the author's major points is developed primarily through one POD: classifying, causes and effects, and process analysis (how something works). Tell which is used for each main point.
6. Which point do you think the author explains best—and why?
7. Tell where the author has used a dictionary definition, a negation, and a metaphor. How do these brief definitions help you better understand depression?
8. Where do detailed examples and specific words help you better understand the author's meaning?
9. Name three ways to further develop any major point in this paragraph. Consider active verbs, specific words, sensory details, revealing thoughts and emotions, comparisons/contrasts, brief definitions, PODs, and further explanation.

Writing an Extended Definition Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that defines a term. The word you choose might be a person, place, thing, idea, or emotional state. Begin with a topic sentence that names your term and states or implies that you will define it. As you have practiced in the skills section, use brief definitions and the patterns of development (PODs) to explain your topic, and, as always, include specific, detailed examples.

Audience and Purpose



For more on audience, see Chapter 1.

As you think over terms for this assignment, try to choose one that you know and care about, that you want to explain to others. Jhonnatan Percca wanted to tell his fellow classmates about his experiences as an immigrant in the United States. He felt that giving insight into his life might help U.S.-born classmates see immigrants as people with full lives—not just as "border crashers." Cynthia Urlocker chose to write about depression, having dealt with it in her own life, to people who don't know much about the illness. She is careful to explain unfamiliar terms (such as *dysthymic* and *bipolar*) and to appeal to those who don't understand its severity (explaining why depressed people can't "just snap out of it"). Having a purpose and clearly imagining who will read your work will help you find the right words to define your term.

Your main purpose is to explain, to try to capture an essential, defining part of your term, but you may do so in a way that entertains. Your paragraph may also move people to think differently about your topic or to take some action.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Definition Paragraphs



Don't limit yourself to a formal definition, although a dictionary may be a good place to start.

It may seem hard to find 200 to 250 words to say about a single word, especially when a dictionary definition may be barely a sentence long. However, if you allow your creativity to work for you and pursue several possible terms with the PODs in mind, including detailed examples, you may surprise yourself. Think about the two chapter models and how each student chose to detail and explain each term.

Be certain to stick with a *single* meaning for your term (a movie *star* is considerably different from a *star* in the sky, for example). Also, remember that you are trying to determine an essential, defining quality of your term, something without which your term would no longer be itself (for example, a politician has to be able to drum up votes, so vote getting is one defining quality for a politician).

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR DEFINITION

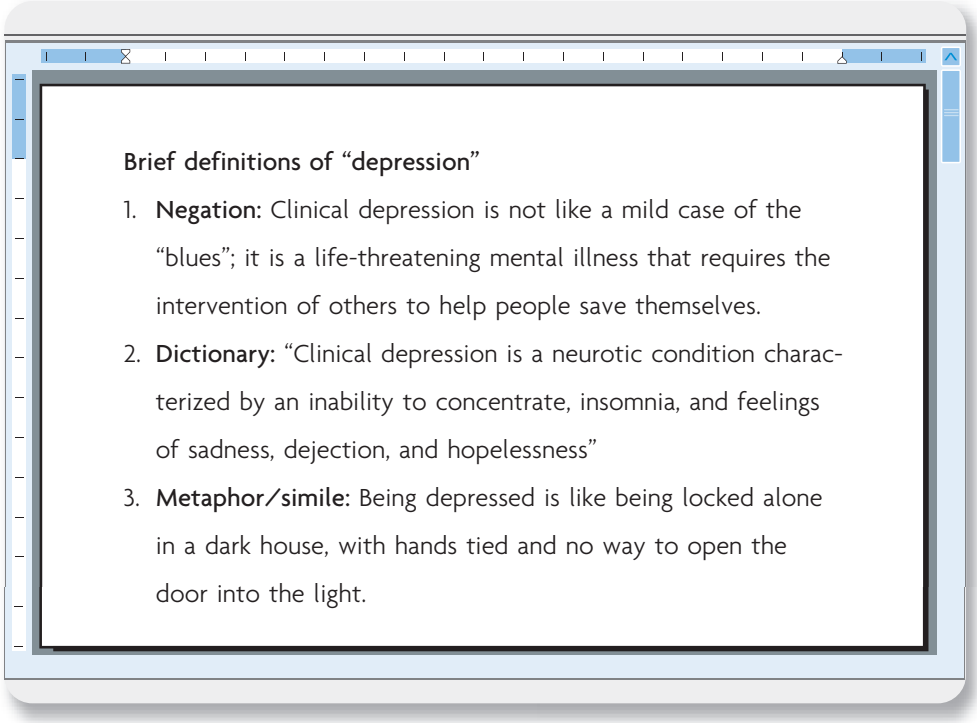


This topic list may give you a few ideas for your definition paragraph.

1. **People:** movie stars, athletes, musicians, family members, significant others, coaches, teachers, employers, politicians, criminals, soldiers, winners, losers
2. **Behaviors:** responsible, irresponsible, generous, selfish, charitable, courageous, cowardly, ethical, loyal, disciplined, sexist, arrogant, greedy, industrious, lazy
3. **Occupations:** teacher, minister, coach, salesperson, counselor, scientist, mechanic, firefighter, carpenter, housepainter, mason, welder, lawyer, athlete, adventure leader

4. **Work:** job (vs. career); good, bad, part-time; chores (household work, car maintenance, care of children or pets); volunteer (PTA, church, sports)
5. **Groups:** sports teams, hunters, bands, youth groups, subcultures (Goths, skinheads, punks, skateboarders, gamers, SCA members), friends, Facebook friends
6. **Animals:** pets, wild animals, domesticated farm animals, carnivores, herbivores, omnivores, marine mammals, flying animals, extinct animals, mythological animals
7. **Places:** restaurants, homes, gyms, amusement parks, zoos, vacation spots, cities, sports arenas, national parks, city parks, wilderness areas, libraries, schools
8. **Events:** concerts, dances, dates, graduations, political rallies, marriages, births, vacations, hospital emergencies, car accidents, speeding tickets, funerals
9. **Things:** cars, motorcycles, video games, play stations, movies, music, books, computers, search engines, blogs, weapons, musical instruments, works of art
10. **Concepts:** health, credit, freedom, culture, marriage, divorce, capital punishment, war, peace, political systems, political parties, PACS, reality TV, global warming

Most of the prewriting methods listed in Chapter 1 can help you generate ideas for your terms; also, you might try brief definitions and, of course, the PODs. Here is prewriting using brief definitions and PODs for our model paragraph on depression:



Brief definitions of "depression"

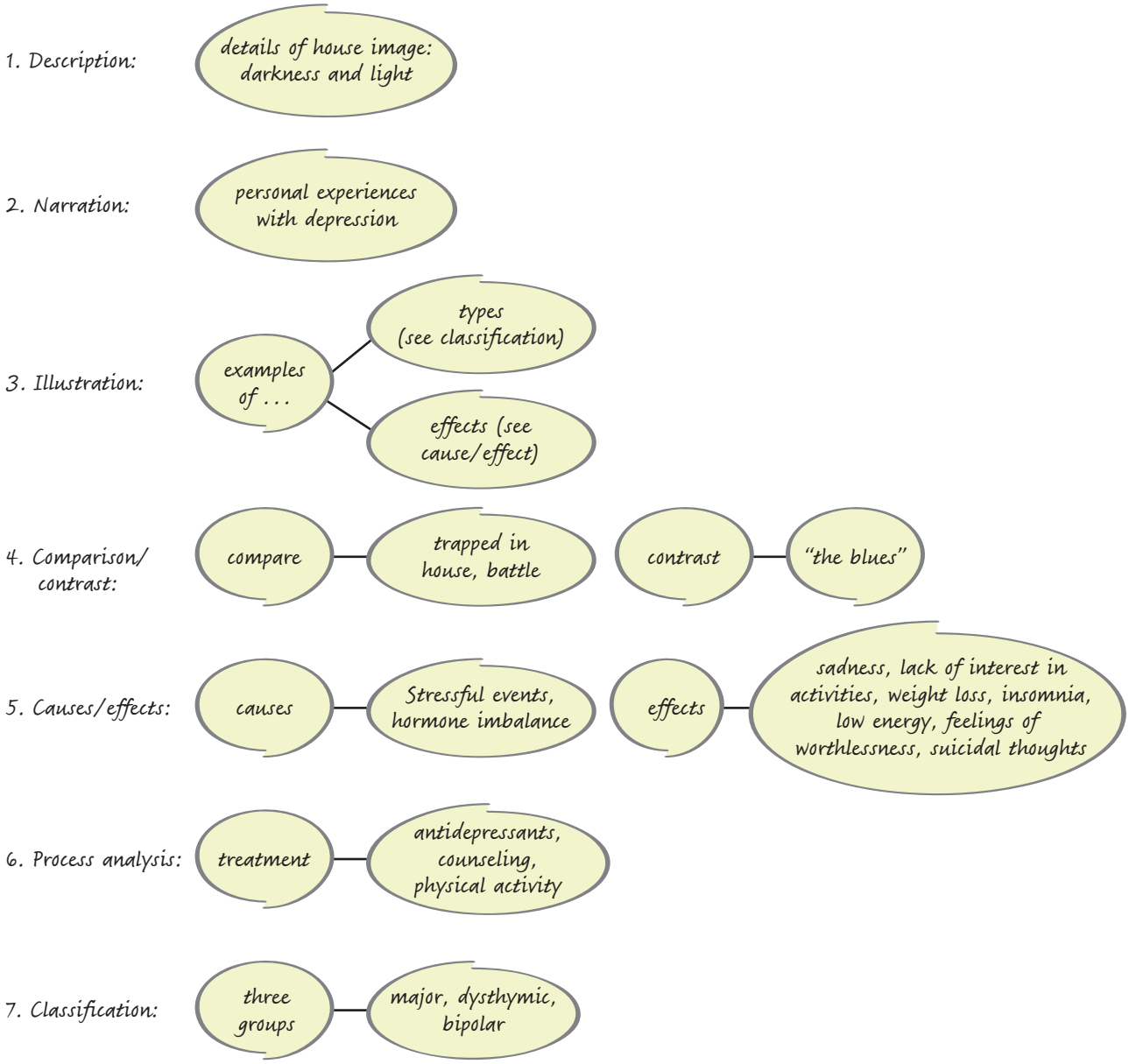
1. **Negation:** Clinical depression is not like a mild case of the "blues"; it is a life-threatening mental illness that requires the intervention of others to help people save themselves.
2. **Dictionary:** "Clinical depression is a neurotic condition characterized by an inability to concentrate, insomnia, and feelings of sadness, dejection, and hopelessness"
3. **Metaphor/simile:** Being depressed is like being locked alone in a dark house, with hands tied and no way to open the door into the light.



Remember that the brief definitions are **negation**, **dictionary**, and **metaphor**.

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Patterns of development (PODs) for *depression*



One goal of this extended definition assignment is to use several PODs, like most real-world writers do. Thinking about all the PODs during your prewriting process, as illustrated above, will help you uncover useful material.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 28.2

Follow the clustering example above to discover several defining traits of your topic. Which points say the most about your term? Who are your readers, what might they know about the topic, and what words might you need to explain for them?

FEEDBACK *Prepare a list of words you are planning to define in your paragraph. In small groups, discuss which words might require definitions and which most people are generally familiar with.*



Organizing Definition Paragraphs

The overall organizational pattern of definition paragraphs will often be from least to most important point, although depending on your term, you might organize by time or space. Arranging by time could be useful if, for example, you choose to define an event; arranging by space might work when defining a location. Remember that you will also organize within your main points. One point that discusses how something works or that tells a story might be arranged chronologically. Another point could use order of importance, as Cynthia Urlocker does with her first point about the types of depression.

In your topic sentence, be sure to name your term and make clear that you intend to define/explain it. You can use the word *define*, as in topic sentence 1 below, or follow your term with verbs like *is, are*, or *means*, as you can see in topic sentence 2:

1. Seventeen million people in our country suffer from an awful condition known as depression, defined by. . . .
2. *Dictionary.com* says that immigrants are persons "who migrate to another country, usually seeking permanent residence. . . ."

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 28.3

Write out your working topic sentence. Have you mentioned your topic and indicated that a definition paragraph will follow? Now create a rough outline that lists each POD and brief definition that you will use. Are your points arranged by importance?

Drafting Definition Paragraphs

Moving into your first draft, keep the following points in mind:

1. Brief definitions are a good place to start your paragraph.
2. Consider adding explanations and briefly defining words using commas, dashes, or parentheses.
3. Consciously try to include several PODs.
4. Give your reader important, defining points about your term.
5. Decide on a point to your definition before you draft (realizing that you may change your mind as you think through your topic).



With your topic sentence written and your points arranged, you are almost ready to draft, but take a moment to review the list of transitions and other connectors (pp. 288–289).

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 28.4

After finishing your first rough draft, reread it, highlight your subtopic sentences with a marker or your word-processing software's highlighting feature, and circle or box any connecting words. Now copy your marked

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subtopic sentences, and turn these in to your instructor. What parts of your draft do you like most and least? Why? Answer in a paragraph.

FEEDBACK *Trade papers with a classmate, and use this chapter's revising checklist below to guide your critique. In your journal or blog, note at least one suggestion from your classmate that you plan to implement during revision.*

Revising Definition Paragraphs

As you begin revising your definition first draft, use the following checklist as a guide:

HINT

For more detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING DEFINITION PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Does your topic sentence name a topic and indicate that a definition is coming?
- ☐ Is your overall organization consistent: space, time, or importance?
- ☐ Have you used subtopic sentences effectively?
- ☐ What further details or explanations might your target audience need? Have you included comparisons and defined unfamiliar terms?
- ☐ Have you used several brief definitions and several PODs?
- ☐ Have you used transitions and other connectors, especially in subtopic sentences?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence rename the topic and make a point?

HINT

You could also take Alternate Assignment #1 in the opposite direction by defining the worst parent or job imaginable.

Alternate Assignments

Here are several definition writing options that may be of interest. For any of these assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Use several brief definitions and several PODs.
- Begin with a topic sentence that names your term and predicts a definition.
- Begin each major point with a subtopic sentence.
- End with a concluding sentence that makes a point about your topic.
- Use transitions and other connectors.

HINT

For Alternate Assignment #2, consider opening with the technique of defining by negation (p. 410), clearing up myths about what people think you do. Remember, too, that being a student is a job you could write about.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Definition

1. **Write a definition paragraph that treats a term as the best or worst of its kind.** What qualities would the *best* mother or father possess? Think about experiences with your parents and/or how you are raising your own children. Try brainstorming by filling in the blank in the following sentence: *A really good mother (or father) should be* _____. Or if you could have any job in the world—even one that doesn't yet exist—what would it be? Try filling in this blank: *The perfect job for me would be* _____.

2. **Write a paragraph that defines your current job.** What are the essential elements in your work that make it what it is? For example, a teacher must interact with students; this is a defining element of the job. Teachers prepare course materials for students, conduct class (in person or online), evaluate student work, and stay current in their discipline. Auto mechanics must know about part or all of the cars they work on; they must be able to handle tools competently. A waitperson must be able to interact with customers and keep food orders organized. Your purpose in this assignment might be to give a friend some insight into what you do for a living.

3. WRITE AN EXTENDED DEFINITION DEALING WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE



Consider the following terms: *endangered species*, *global warming*, *acid rain*, *soil erosion*, *aquifer depletion*, *pollution* (water, air, soil, noise). You might read an article to pin down the main points that you feel define the issue. For example, what does it mean to "deplete an aquifer?" You could begin by defining "aquifer" (an underground water source contained in a layer of rock and sand); next discuss how water accumulates in it; and then perhaps choose a specific example, such as the Ogallala aquifer under the Great Plains, describing the effects of using up the stored water for irrigation. What will happen to the fertile, irrigated land seen in the accompanying photograph when the remaining 40 percent of the water has been drawn out? Your purpose might be inform or persuade. ●





As you read articles or consult dictionaries, be careful to put all ideas in your writing into your own words. For more information, see the Plagiarism Tutorial at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Linking to Future Experience



Defining is a skill you will practice frequently in college writing. Essays or exams might require you to define "democratic" (political science), "gender" (psychology), or "epiphany" (English). Even more frequently, you will use definition to help answer questions that don't explicitly say "define this." Whenever you suspect that your audience might be unfamiliar with a term or concept, offer a brief definition. Extended definitions might help you make a persuasive point (Chapter 29), classify information (Chapter 27), or analyze causes and effects (Chapter 24). The writing assignments in preceding chapters focused on specific PODs, helping you hone your skills at each. Now, having worked through this chapter, you have learned to combine them. As a result, you are more prepared to tackle complex writing assignments.

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ACTIVITY 28.5 **WORKING ONLINE: *Defining in Context***

Think of a word used as slang that has a separate formal meaning (for example, "cool," "sweet," "wicked," etc.) Write a paragraph that describes a setting in which you would use the word as slang. Then, visit Dictionary.com (http://www.dictionary.com) and find the word's formal meaning. Write a second paragraph that explains the difference in the two (or more) meanings. Is one definition the "true" meaning? How do listeners or readers know the difference?



ACTIVITY 28.6 **WORKING ONLINE: *Definition Review***

Take the Chapter 28 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

HINT

For Activity 28.5 above: Slang words are used only in informal settings, and more in speech than in writing. Most are used only by specific groups of people. Most slang goes out of style quickly or changes definition over time.

Chapter Summary

1. Definition means limiting and clarifying a term, separating it from similar words.
2. We define words with an audience in mind, explaining as much or little as they need.
3. Brief definitions and patterns of development are used for extended definitions.
4. Definitions depend on detailed, specific examples and thorough explanations.
5. Each main point should be introduced with a subtopic sentence.
6. All sentences, but especially subtopic sentences, should be clearly linked by transitions and other connectors.
7. The concluding sentence should begin with a connector, link to the topic sentence, and make a point.
8. Extended definitions can be organized by time or space but are more often arranged by importance.
9. Writing is not complete until it has been revised and carefully edited.

Writing Persuasively (Argument)

29

[*Both of these images show an argument. What does the advertisement try to persuade us to do and what does it argue about peanuts? What might this lawyer be arguing for? Write a paragraph in the voice of the lawyer or as a representative of the American Peanut Farmers. Try to reflect the tone of the argument as pictured here, and be as convincing as you can.*]





The National Peanut Board's persuasive messaging motivates consumers to drive demand of USA-grown peanuts.

KEY TOPICS

- Developing skills in persuasive writing
  - Defining the issue
  - Giving reasons and support
  - Connecting with the audience
  - Countering opposition
- Learning from a student model
- Writing a persuasive paragraph

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Setting the Stage

In these two images—a courtroom scene and an advertisement—can you see a common thread? Imagine what lawyers and advertisers might want from their audience. The defense attorney may be arguing to save the defendant from prison, and the advertisement wants consumers to buy a product. These are just two examples of how people try to **persuade** others to change the way they think or act. We might persuade a friend to see a certain movie, a client to buy an insurance plan, a child to eat salad, or a teacher to reconsider a grade. Persuasion is the focus of Chapter 29.

To move people effectively, we need to build an **argument**, meaning a convincing case for our position. Arguments require **reasons** and **evidence** to support those reasons. They also require a strong sense for an opposing viewpoint. In this chapter we will practice these points along with appealing to a target audience.

Linking to Previous Experience

What You Already Know about Persuasion

Persuasion (along with informing and entertaining) is one of the basic aims of communication. For other assignments in this book, you may have already written several paragraphs that try to change a person's mind or behavior. Certainly, in other classes in college or K–12, we have all tried to persuade. When taking exams, we try to convince the teacher that we know the material. When we are late or absent or have missed an assignment, we offer reasons that we hope will convince the teacher to be "reasonable," meaning to excuse the behavior. From our early years onward, we have practiced persuasion: "Mom and Dad, I want a _____, and I need it because _____ (fill in the blanks). When our brothers or sisters bothered us, we encouraged them to stop by threatening to tell our parents or using another motivator. We often persuade our friends to go places and do things (sometimes best not done!).

At school, at home, on the job, and in social situations, people constantly interact and often try to influence one another. Persuasion is a basic part of the human experience.

English Review Note

In some cultures, it is considered rude to directly argue a point or state an opinion; in the American English classroom, articulate your arguments clearly.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 29.1

When was the last time you tried to talk someone into something, such as going to a movie or ball game; loaning you an outfit or a car; or getting along with a coworker or family member? How did you try to motivate the person? Did you appeal to his or her sense of fun, sympathy, or right and wrong? Did you show how he or she might benefit from your suggestion? In a few sentences, tell how you tried to persuade the person, explaining whether you succeeded and why.

FEEDBACK *Reenact the scene you described; try your persuasive techniques out on your classmates. Ask them why your argument is (or is not) convincing.*



Developing Skills in Persuasive Writing

The following activities will help you work with persuasive writing:

1. Defining the issue
2. Giving reasons and support
3. Connecting with the audience
4. Countering opposing reasons and audience objections

Defining the Issue

Persuasion often backfires from the start when the writer does not present the issue clearly. In this picture, notice the mood of this discussion and the expression on all three women's faces. These teenaged sisters have asked their mother to help them buy new outfits, and she has agreed. The three of them just moved to a new town, and both girls have interviews for summer jobs lined up. Last year, they worked jobs after school and made enough money to buy their own clothes, but they quit last month so they could help their mom with moving. Which of the following two presentations of the issue do you think most accurately represents the situation, and which would most likely achieve its goal of persuasion?



1. Mom, you need to buy us these outfits. We're broke, and we deserve them. You owe us.
2. Mom, we know things are tight after the move—but think of all the costs we saved by doing it ourselves. We both have job interviews this week, and these new clothes will help us look professional. Also, when we get our first paychecks, we'll take you out to dinner.

If you think version 2 is more persuasive, notice that it clarifies the issue (and shows the young women as being responsible and considerate of their audience's feelings).

ACTIVITY 29.1 *Defining the Issue*

The following topic sentences present issues that are unclear and so might be misinterpreted by a reader. On a separate sheet of paper, rewrite each to clarify the issue and the writer's position on it.

EXAMPLE:

Unfocused issue: Mining is ruining the environment and so should be stopped.

Focused issue/topic sentence: *Mountaintop mining is permanently defacing mountains and spewing toxic chemicals into nearby watersheds and so should be stopped.*

1. **Unfocused issue:** Someone should do something about global warming.
2. **Unfocused issue:** Cigarette smokers should be more careful about secondhand smoke.

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3. **Unfocused issue:** Cell phones distract people, so they shouldn't use them.
4. **Unfocused issue:** Students should be able to get more money for college.

Giving Reasons and Support

All arguments are developed with **reasons** (the main points made about an issue) and **evidence** (support for those points).

Evidence takes several forms with which you are already familiar:

1. **Facts/statistics:** commonly accepted truths in words and numbers
2. **Authorities:** the opinions and ideas of experts in a field
3. **Examples:** specific illustrations
4. **Anecdotes:** brief stories
5. **Scenarios:** "what-if" situations, speculating about causes and effects
6. **Logical interpretation:** explanations of how reasons and evidence support the main point of the argument

If, for example, we wanted to argue that states should pass a law requiring students to finish high school, we could give several reasons:

A. High school dropouts are more likely to do drugs or increase their abuse of them.
B. High school dropouts are at increased risk of becoming criminals.
C. High school dropouts usually make less money than high school graduates.

We could then support, say, reason B, breaking the law, with these forms of (hypothetical) evidence:

1. **Fact:** In 2007 high school dropouts accounted for 25,000 felonies and 75,000 misdemeanors nationwide.
2. **Authority:** The Attorney General has said, "Teen dropouts increase their risk of serving prison time by 35 percent. We need a federal law to keep these kids in school."
3. **Examples:** Kansas decreased crime in that state by 7 percent the year it enacted a law to keep teens in high school till graduation.
4. **Anecdotes:** My best friend, Shaun, dropped out at the end of his sophomore year and was dealing drugs till he was arrested three months ago.
5. **Scenarios:** If we continue to let students drop out of high school, many will slide into poverty, and as they grow older and become parents, some will let their children follow their example, creating an endless cycle of misery.
6. **Logical interpretation:** It makes sense that undereducated teens are tempted toward crime, since they have a hard time finding well-paying jobs.

You will be more convincing if you give solid reasons to explain your position on an issue and then back those reasons up with strong evidence, as in the preceding examples.



ACTIVITY 29.2 WORKING TOGETHER: *Giving Reasons and Support*

Listed below are four issues with one reason to support each position. With group members, review the forms of evidence above, and invent three kinds of evidence to support each of the reasons. Write these on separate paper.

1. **Topic sentence:** Houston needs more bicycling paths for its residents.

   Reason: Many people like to cycle in the city, but riding on the streets is unsafe.

2. **Topic sentence:** Our city should allow riverboat gambling.

   Reason: Casinos bring in a lot of money, and this city needs it.

3. **Topic sentence:** When they move to a new location, convicted child molesters should be required to report their convictions to local authorities.

   Reason: Because pedophiles are seldom "cured," they remain a danger to children.

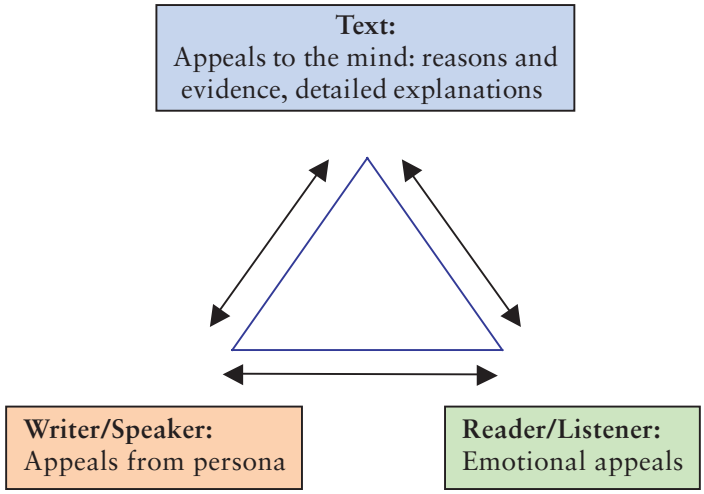
4. **Topic sentence:** Bartenders should be required by law to stop serving anyone who is clearly intoxicated.

   Reason: Too much alcohol is harmful to the drinker and can be deadly to the public if the person drives drunk.

Connecting with the Audience

In other writing this semester, we have seen the importance of knowing the reader. A clear sense of audience helps us decide what words to define; how much to explain; and what examples, comparisons, and other references the reader will best respond to. However, being aware of the audience is even more important in persuasive writing because now we are not only trying to present information clearly but to present it in a way that makes us seem believable. Our believability, or credibility, is our **persona** in writing, and it can be powerfully persuasive. You might think of your persona as how you want people to think of you: as a good, fun, friendly, intelligent, fair, concerned person. Readers pay more attention to writers they can respect and like.

Another way to connect with readers is to understand enough about them to meet their needs for information and sense what is important to them. Persuasive speakers and writers appeal to their audience's **emotions** as well as their mind. When writers or speakers succeed in presenting the issue, reasons, and evidence clearly; maintain their credibility; and appeal to the reader's emotions, they have touched on the three areas shown below in the Communication Triangle and have probably presented their argument persuasively.



COMMUNICATION TRIANGLE

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Which of the following attempts at persuasion do you think would most effectively connect with an audience of parents with children who watch too much TV?

1. I can't see any good reason for parents to let their kids watch all that junk on TV. If you ask me, these parents are just lazy. They don't want to play with their kids or help them with their homework, so the parents just park the kids in front of the idiot box. Why do you think they call it the idiot box, anyway? Because it turns kids who watch too much into idiots—duh. If you let your kids watch as much as the national average of 6 hours a day, you might as well save some money and take them out of school now because your kids aren't going anywhere—except maybe to a life of minimum-wage work. Go ahead, cave in; let your kids watch all the TV they want to. They'll love you for it . . . till they're older and they realize that you let them flush their lives down the TV toilet.

2. What most disturbs me about excessive television for children is the negative effect it has on their learning. Of course, there is a lot of good programming—on the Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, Nickelodeon, Travel, and so on—that exposes children to new ideas. But the truth is that most kids are more attracted to the action/role-playing programs than to a History Channel documentary on the life of Lincoln. When children are unsupervised, they can easily spend 4 to 6 hours a day—the national average—watching junk, which leaves little time for homework or other learning activities. Schools practically beg parents to spend time with their children reading and helping with math and other course work. How can this happen when TV has captured the audience? And schoolwork is not all that suffers. Don't we as parents want to involve our children in other learning activities like music, dance, and sports?

—Marisa Youmbi

If you chose example 2, you can probably see that the writer shows herself as a reasonable, concerned *fellow* parent ("don't *we* as parents"). The author admits that TV can be good and softens, or **qualifies**, her statements, saying "most kids" rather than "all," "can spend" rather than "will," and "little time" rather than "no time." Being careful not to overstate the case—that is, qualifying statements where needed—is an important part of maintaining a reasonable persona.

Also, notice how the author in example 1 seems to be attacking his audience, calling them "lazy" and telling them that their "kids aren't going anywhere." The author uses the pronoun "you" as he criticizes his readers, thereby cutting himself off from his audience, unlike the author in version 2, who wisely includes herself with the reader, saying "we."



Show the audience that you understand them; use the pronouns *we*, *us*, and *our* where appropriate; and try to appeal to the reader's emotions.

ACTIVITY 29.3 *Connecting with the Audience*

On separate paper, revise the following paragraph to make it more persuasive. Refer to the preceding example paragraphs for reminders about how to soften the tone and build credibility (persona).

Issue + your position: Lindsay Lohan should take her rehabilitation seriously, finally leaving behind the drugs and alcohol.
Audience: Lindsay Lohan

Lindsay, let me say this in a way plain enough for you to understand: "You are going to crash and burn!" What's with this boozing and drug thing? Here you have a great life—respect, fame, money—and all you can think about is throwing it away. Not one but two DUIs in a week and the second with cocaine possession for good measure, while driving with a suspended license. Don't you think that rules apply to you too? Look at all the people you're disappointing: fans, friends,

family. Sure, you have stress being a big movie star and all, but you have to learn to cope with it, just like all the other grown-ups. Lindsay, your Disney days are way over, so it's time to start acting like the adult you are. Save your career; save your life. Check into rehab—and this time take it seriously.

Countering Opposition

Successful arguments give solid reasons plus support, but they go further: they meet objections to their reasons and overcome reasons given by those on the opposite side of the issue. For example, in this excerpt from the paragraph on too much TV, notice that the author anticipates a reason that some parents might give to justify letting their children watch a lot of TV: good programming:

> Of course, there is a lot of good programming—on the Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, Nickelodeon, Travel, and so on—that exposes children to new ideas.

However, after giving the "opposition's" reason, the author overcomes, or counters, it by telling that most children prefer the fun but lightweight shows:

> But the truth is that most kids are more attracted to the action/role-playing programs than to a History Channel documentary on the life of Lincoln.

Writers often overcome opposing reasons by showing how the reason is incomplete, irrelevant, or illogical. Questioning the evidence the opposition gives to support the opposing reason is another way of countering.

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ACTIVITY 29.4 Countering Opposition

Read through the student model below, noticing the three major reasons in the underlined subtopic sentences: quality time, skills, and career. Write out or type up the opposing reasons that the author includes under her final reason, housewife as a legitimate career. Now tell in a few sentences whether you think the author has overcome the opposing reasons. Do you think this argument would persuade its intended audience, women who "disapprove" of housewife as a career occupation for women? Why or why not?

Wanted: Housewives and Other Career Professionals

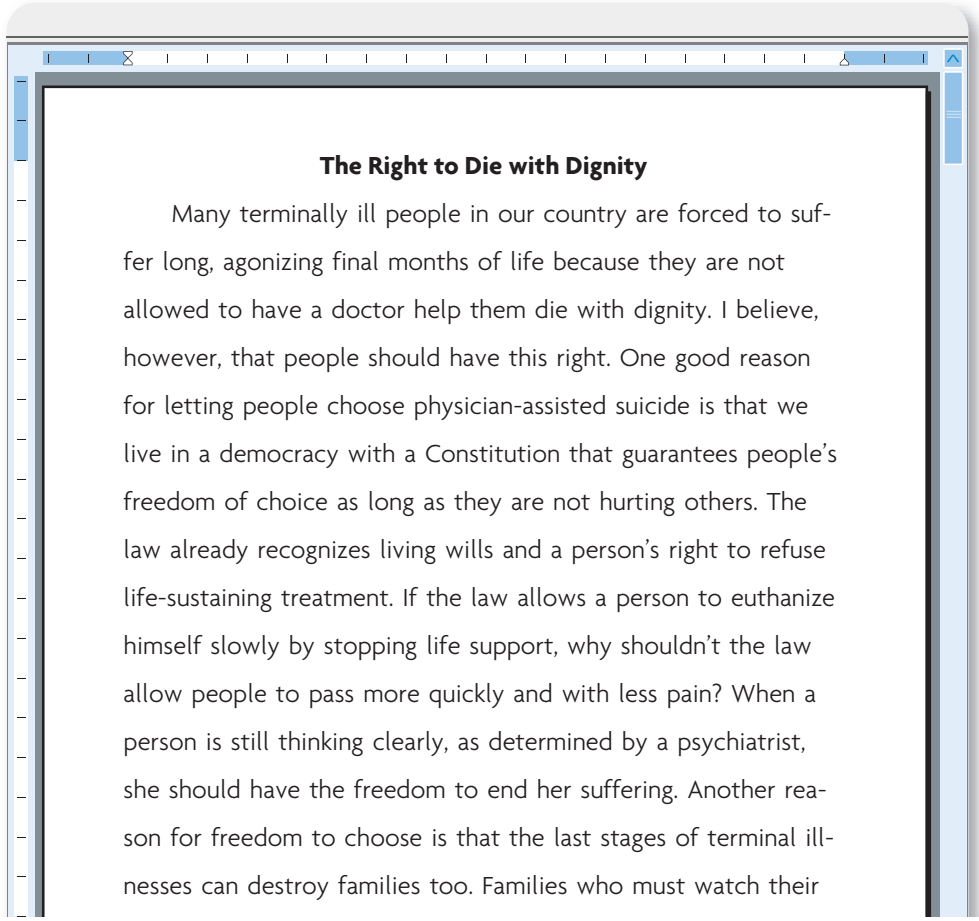
Today women have the right to be whomever they want to be, and this choice should include being a housewife without having to deal with disapproval from other women. One advantage for a woman who maintains the home is that she can spend quality time with her children. Most women I know in the workforce feel that they don't have enough time for their kids, and they feel a great deal of stress (and some guilt) over it. However, a stay-at-home mom can be there to help the toddler learn her ABCs, walk her 7-year-old home from school, and review those tough math problems with her middle-schooler. A child's youth flows by so quickly that if a parent isn't close by, she misses much of it. Besides being there for the children, housewives also have to develop a complex skill set, one that any professional might envy, that includes the ability to multitask, micromanage, and organize her home. A typical day might require her to walk and feed the dog, clean house, wash clothes, drop off the dry cleaning, drop off the kids at practice, shop for groceries, make sure Suzy takes her allergy medicine, help Billy with his algebra, make dinner, wash the dishes, put the kids to bed, and make time for her husband. If a woman does not quickly learn how to organize her time, prioritize, and multitask, she will not be a successful housewife, and her family will suffer. The main reason women shouldn't feel pressured to avoid being a housewife is

that this position *is* a legitimate career, a life work that deserves the best people and demands the highest level of commitment. If a woman wants to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor, engineer, architect, or lawyer, terrific. Women are every bit men's equals and should have these opportunities. Also, women can and do manage to juggle a professional career and motherhood—but we know that the stress factor is high. The career of *housewife* demands as much hard work and self-sacrifice as any other profession, and the goal of the professional housewife is a worthy one: to raise healthy, happy, productive children and deepen the love and commitment with a spouse as the years pass. As women, in our ongoing efforts to achieve equality with men, we should move past our stereotyping of each other and give those who choose the profession of housewife the respect they deserve.

—Amy Myers

Learning from a Student Model: The Persuasive Paragraph

The following paragraph, which argues for physician-assisted suicide, will help you understand how to write your persuasive paragraph. Read the model closely for organizational points (topic, subtopic, and concluding sentences and connectors) and development (detailed explanations and specific examples). Notice how the author carefully explains her reasons to an audience that includes her classmates who are undecided on the issue. Erin repeats the point of "freedom" several times. Why might this point be persuasive to her readers?



The Right to Die with Dignity

Many terminally ill people in our country are forced to suffer long, agonizing final months of life because they are not allowed to have a doctor help them die with dignity. I believe, however, that people should have this right. One good reason for letting people choose physician-assisted suicide is that we live in a democracy with a Constitution that guarantees people's freedom of choice as long as they are not hurting others. The law already recognizes living wills and a person's right to refuse life-sustaining treatment. If the law allows a person to euthanize himself slowly by stopping life support, why shouldn't the law allow people to pass more quickly and with less pain? When a person is still thinking clearly, as determined by a psychiatrist, she should have the freedom to end her suffering. Another reason for freedom to choose is that the last stages of terminal illnesses can destroy families too. Families who must watch their

loved one—husband, mother, brother, sister—suffer for months when the pain medication is no longer enough and listen to them beg them for release from life are under terrible pressure. People eaten alive by cancer in their last weeks have no hope, and the family can't help them. When family members most want to help the one they love, in the end, they can do nothing. They feel as if they have failed. But the most important reason to let the terminally sick choose death is that people deserve the right to pass from life with dignity. Yes, human life is important and should not be taken without a good reason, but as a country we say there are these reasons, like capital punishment, homicide in self-defense, and killing by soldiers and police officers. Human life is important, but the *quality* of that life is even more important. When a person of sound mind finds himself a skeleton chained to a bed, no longer able to feel pleasure and so torn by pain that he can no longer even find a place of rest in his own mind, then it is time to let the person determine his own destiny. It is time to let him die with dignity. As a nation we owe it to our terminally ill citizens to give them and their doctors the freedom to end the suffering.

—*Erin Berg*

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THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. What two important points do we learn from the topic sentence?
2. What words in the concluding sentence link to the topic sentence?
3. What point does Erin make in her last sentence?
4. What three major reasons does the author give to support her position, and what do we call the sentences in which they are introduced?
5. What opposing reasons or objections from her audience does Erin overcome?
6. What emotional appeals does the author use? Are they effective? Why?
7. How would you describe the author's persona? Does she seem believable to you? Why?
8. Which reason do you think the author explains best? Why?
9. Name three ways to further develop any major reason in this paragraph. Consider active verbs, specific words, sensory details, revealing thoughts and emotions, comparisons/contrasts, brief definitions, PODs, and further explanation.



For item 8, consider detailed examples and specific words.

Writing a Persuasive Paragraph

The Assignment

Write a paragraph of roughly 200 to 250 words that takes a position on an issue. By definition an **issue** is a topic that people may disagree about, giving reasons for their differing positions and supporting those reasons with evidence (see Activity 29.2). When you try to persuade an audience to accept your position, you must also answer the reader's objections and overcome opposing reasons.

Audience and Purpose

Clearly, if writers want to persuade someone, they should know that reader. First, it is important to define words and explain ideas for the intended audience. For instance, in "The Right to Die with Dignity," Erin Berg expects her readers to be familiar with terms like *democracy, Constitution, homicide*, and *euthanize*. Similarly, in "Wanted" (p. 429), Amy Myers expects her audience of women to know words like *multitask, micromanage*, and *stereotype*. But it is also vital to know the audience to anticipate their objections and what appeals might work with them. Erin assumes that her readers value freedom of choice and freedom to end suffering, so she appeals to these values. She also responds to objections to her position, such as that the taking of human life is always wrong. Amy reassures her readers that she, too, believes women are equal to men, that she is not advocating gender stereotyping.



For more on connecting with audience, see pp. 427–428.

Clarifying your position, explaining thoroughly, and dealing with objections/opposing reasons depend on identifying your audience and will help you build a strong argument. Your main purpose is to persuade, to change people's thinking and/or move them to action, although you will certainly communicate information and may also entertain your reader while your argument unfolds.

Discovering Ideas: Prewriting for Persuasive Paragraphs

Choose an issue that you feel interested in and passionate about. Your issue does not need to have global consequence (global warming, the war in Iraq). In fact, some of the best short arguments come from daily life. For instance, maybe you need to persuade your roommate to begin cleaning up after herself. Maybe you deserve a raise and can prove it to your boss. Perhaps you need to end a relationship—gently. Our chapter models deal with a national issue, physician-assisted suicide, and a personal issue, respect for housewives. Either approach can be worthwhile. However, if you choose a "larger" issue, be sure to focus it adequately. The following topic list may give you a few ideas:

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR PERSUASION

Issues from Family Life

- Families should establish daily "talk time" when everyone discusses daily events.
- Parents should not allow TVs or computers in their children's bedrooms.
- Parents should use other methods besides spanking to discipline their children.
- Parents should remove handguns from their house.
- Families should encourage their elderly to live with them instead of in assisted-living situations.



Remember, not all topics are issues. Issues are topics on which people hold opposing viewpoints.

Issues from Personal Life

- You should/shouldn't get a tattoo or piercing.
- You should/shouldn't have cosmetic surgery.
- You should lose/gain weight.
- You should get yourself in better physical shape.
- A friend should stop or reduce some self-destructive behavior (drinking, smoking, gambling, drugs).

Issues from School

- Colleges should make used (and therefore less-expensive) textbooks more available.
- Colleges should provide tutors for their athletes.
- Colleges should offer free day care for students with children.
- College should/should not require service learning as part of its core curriculum.
- Colleges should do away with/more strictly enforce attendance policies.

Issues from the Workplace

- Your company should pay for your college education.
- Your company should allow job sharing.
- Your company should offer on-site day care.
- Your company should change some existing policy (offer an alternative).
- Your company should award merit pay.

Issues from the Community

- Your city should create more bike paths and lanes on streets for bicycles.
- People should not use cell phones while they are driving except for emergencies.
- The driving age should/should not be raised to 18.
- The government should/should not be allowed to wiretap without a court order.
- Your city should raise/lower the speed limit along a street you use or in your neighborhood.

ISSUES FROM THE ENVIRONMENT

- The U.S. government should do more to stop global warming.
- Homeowners should use fewer herbicides and pesticides on their lawns.
- People should give at least $20 annually to an environmental organization.
- Drift net fishing should be outlawed.
- Nuclear energy is a badly flawed approach to the world's energy needs.



Other possible topics:
—Bilingual education vs. monolingual education.
—The U.S. should/shouldn't allow non-residents to get driver's licenses.
—Immigration improves/hurts the economy or the labor force.



After you have chosen one or more issues (issues, not just topics, remember?), the next step is to create a pro/con chart listing reasons favoring and opposing your position on the issue. Below is an example of Erin Berg's prewriting

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list based on her rough topic sentence: "I favor legalizing physician-assisted suicide (PAS) for the terminally ill":

Reasons Favoring My Position	Reasons Opposing My Position
Patient can die with dignity.	It is unethical to take human life.
Laws allow passive euthanasia.	Depressed people make bad choices.
Slow, agonizing deaths destroy families.	Painkillers will ease the pain.
People have constitutional freedom.	Doctors might try to profit from PAS
Expense can bankrupt families.	Legalizing PAS will cause more to choose it.

Erin won't use all the reasons she has listed—just as you may not use all of yours—but now she has the material to build her outline and then develop her reasons with appeals, including evidence.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 29.2

Write a chart like Erin's, modeled above, to explore reasons favoring and opposing your position. What reasons seem most convincing to you, and what opposing reasons or objections might you have to deal with? Tell in a sentence or two who might be interested in this argument. What words might you need to explain for them?

Organizing Persuasive Paragraphs

As you think through your argument, considering what opposing reasons are well known and what objections your audience might have to your reasons, you may cut a few ideas, as you can see Erin did below:

Reasons Favoring My Position	Reasons Opposing My Position
People have constitutional freedom.	Depressed people make bad choices.
Laws allow passive euthanasia.	Painkillers will ease the pain.
Slow, agonizing deaths destroy families.	It is unethical to take human life.
Patient can die with dignity.	~~Doctors might try to profit from PAS~~
~~Expense can bankrupt families~~.	~~Legalizing PAS will cause more to choose it~~.



Now is a good time to review the list of transitions and other connectors (pp. 288–289).

Next, you can also see from the list above that Erin arranged her main reasons by **order of importance,** an effective method for arguments. Notice that she shifted "dying with dignity" and "constitutional freedom," placing dignity as her last, strongest point to better emphasize it. She also shifted the strong opposing reason of the sanctity of human life into her last main point so that she could overcome the reason with evidence, emphasizing the strength of her position.

When you write your topic sentence, which will state your issue and position, you might use words like *should, ought to,* or *must* to let your reader know that you are building an argument.

JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 29.3

Write out your working topic sentence, underlining the issue once and your position twice. Next, list your main reasons by importance. What evidence or other appeals (persona and emotions) will you use to support your reasons? How do you plan to overcome opposing reasons or objections to your reasons?

Drafting Persuasive Paragraphs

Moving into your first draft, keep the following points in mind:

1. Begin your paragraph with a focused topic sentence, and clarify your position as you write. For example, Erin Berg stresses supporting euthanasia for the *terminally* ill, not for just anyone who is having a bad day.
2. Define terms likely to be unfamiliar to your reader.
3. Where appropriate, use pronouns like *we, us,* and *our* to help connect with the reader.
4. Avoid making statements that are too broad. Instead **qualify** your claims with words like *often, many, most, some, few, usually, frequently, seldom, may, maybe,* and *perhaps*. Notice how Erin began her topic sentence with the words "*Many* terminally ill people."
5. Remember that emotional appeals can be powerful.
6. Try to show your readers why they should be interested in your issue. How does it personally affect them?
7. As always, specific, detailed examples and thorough explanations within the framework of the patterns of development will strengthen your writing.

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JOURNAL / BLOG ENTRY 27.4

After finishing your first rough draft, highlight your subtopic sentences with a marker or your computer's highlight function. Now underline each main reason once and your position statement twice, and circle or box any connecting words. Now, to turn in to your instructor, write or type your marked subtopic sentences separately. What parts of the draft do you like most and least—and why? Answer in a paragraph.

FEEDBACK *Exchange drafts with a classmate, and evaluate, in a paragraph, how well his or her paragraph works persuasively. What is most effective? What suggestions can you make?*



See p. 287–291 for more on connecting words.



Revising Persuasive Paragraphs

As you begin revising your persuasive first draft, use the following checklist as a guide:



For more detailed suggestions for revising all drafts, turn to Chapter 20.

CHECKLIST FOR REVISING PERSUASIVE PARAGRAPHS

- ☐ Have you focused and clarified your issue?
- ☐ Have you used subtopic sentences to introduce each main reason?
- ☐ Have you given enough support to make your reasons convincing?
- ☐ Have you used evidence and explained clearly but also persuaded with your persona and emotional appeals?
- ☐ Have you overcome major opposing reasons and objections to your position?
- ☐ Have you used transitions and other connectors, especially in subtopic sentences?
- ☐ Does your concluding sentence both rename the issue and make a point?

Alternate Assignments

Here are several more persuasive writing options that may be of interest. For any of these alternate assignments, be sure to do the following:

- Define your issue and position clearly in your topic sentence for a specific audience.
- Create a pro/con chart.
- Review the Communication Triangle (p. 427).
- Begin each major point with a subtopic sentence.
- End with a concluding sentence that makes a point about your issue.
- Use transitions and other connectors.



As you think through your reasons for supporting the candidate, you may be preparing yourself to vote more critically in the next election.

Alternate Assignment Possibilities: Persuasion

1. **Persuade someone to vote for a political candidate you favor.** What are three or four convincing reasons to support this person? What reasons would someone give for opposing the candidate? Consider what you like about the politician. Perhaps you respect his or her integrity and can offer proof of that honesty. Maybe you can show from the candidate's voting record that he or she favors issues important to you, such as the environment, health care, education, economic growth, a balanced budget, international trade, the working class, national security, and so forth. What appeals from your persona and what emotional appeals might influence your reader?
2. **Persuade your boss that some part of your job should be changed:** for example, when you clock in or leave, some regular clean-up chore or prepping for the next shift, weekend work, counting out your cash drawer, the

number of customers you have to deal with. List several good reasons for the change, showing your boss how it will improve your performance and so make the business run more efficiently. Consider appealing to your boss's sense of fairness and reminding her or him what a dependable employee you have been. Be willing to compromise, perhaps accepting just a partial change of policy. Anticipate the boss's possible objections, such as that you are simply trying to avoid working hard and that the policy has been in place for years without problems, so why change it now?



3. **WRITE AN ARGUMENT THAT DEALS WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE** like global climate change, air or water pollution, species extinction, habitat destruction, and many others. One approach could be to address a small part of the larger issue. For instance, what are ways to cut energy consumption around the house, thereby reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions? Outside the house inefficient lawnmowers and weed eaters pump carbon into the atmosphere. Inside the home we often overcool our living spaces in the summer and overheat them in the winter. Electrical devices of all kinds suck up more energy than is needed. Decide on a simple energy-saving measure, and promote it to a friend, family member, or business. For example, you might argue that it makes little sense to leave all the lights on in office buildings overnight (as in the picture above, which shows Seattle's Sears Tower and other buildings cutting back power during the World Wildlife Fund's Earth Hour). List reasons that would move your audience, and also anticipate objections. ●



4. **Defend or criticize an advertisement or commercial (on TV, online, or in a magazine).** Consider what claims the image or video is making and how legitimate these claims are. What techniques does the ad use to persuade, and why is it a strong or weak argument for buying the product? You might choose to focus on how the ad's visual component helps or hurts its message.



For Activity 29.5, if you own the movie, watch it again; if not, watch an online clip to refresh your memory of the film.

ACTIVITY 29.5 WORKING ONLINE: *Persuading in Context*

Go to www.rottentomatoes.com and read reviews of a movie you saw recently in the theater, on DVD, or on television. Do you agree or disagree with the general assessment? Write a paragraph persuading possible viewers (or a specific type of audience, such as comedy fans or children) that they would or would not enjoy this film, backing your point up with specific examples.



ACTIVITY 29.6 WORKING ONLINE: *Persuasion Review*

Take the Chapter 29 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



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Linking to Future Experience



Persuasion in writing is one of the most important skills you will learn in college—and its value will only increase as you grow in your academic, personal, and professional lives. Like definition, persuasion is a culmination of other writing patterns: you can use various combinations of descriptions, stories, examples, cause-and-effect analyses, process analyses, classifications, comparisons, contrasts, and definitions to make your case. In an English class, you might argue for a specific interpretation of a poem, using language or structure as evidence. In political science, you could try to persuade readers that a certain form of government is superior to another for particular reasons. And in almost any type of science class, you would use your own lab results and/or documented research to argue a conclusion about your hypothesis. Beyond the classroom, you might use persuasion for any of the following: keeping your landlord from raising the rent, convincing your boss to give you a raise, ending an argument, solving a problem, starting a relationship, making a convincing case for a political candidate, defending a friend's choices, or convincing others to share your opinions. In future writing classes, you'll learn even more about reading, developing, and revising sound arguments.

Chapter Summary

1. Persuasion means moving someone to accept an idea or perform an action.
2. Argument is formal persuasion that tries to move a target audience, using reasons supported by evidence and overcoming opposing reasons and audience objections.
3. Effective persuasion requires clearly defining an issue and position.
4. It is best to define any term with which your audience may be unfamiliar.
5. Arguments are developed not only by evidence and explanation but also by emotional appeals and the appeal of the writer's persona.
6. Arguments suffer when writers make too broad a claim. One solution to this problem is to qualify claims where needed.
7. Insulting or trying to intimidate an audience is a poor persuasive strategy.
8. Arguments are often arranged by order of importance.
9. Each main reason should be introduced with a subtopic sentence.
10. All sentences, but especially subtopic sentences, should be clearly linked by transitions and other connectors.
11. The concluding sentence should begin with a connector, link to the topic sentence, and make a point.
12. Like all writing, persuasion paragraphs are not complete until they have been revised and carefully edited.

Introducing the Essay

5

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BRANNAN



Developing Essays from Paragraphs

30

[*As many small waterfalls create a large river, so, too, do many small paragraphs merge to create an essay. Write a short paragraph discussing your feelings about moving from paragraph to essay writing. What do you think might be your biggest challenge?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Transitioning from paragraph to essay
- Writing introductory paragraphs
- Writing body paragraphs
- Writing concluding paragraphs
- Creating coherence
- Selecting a title

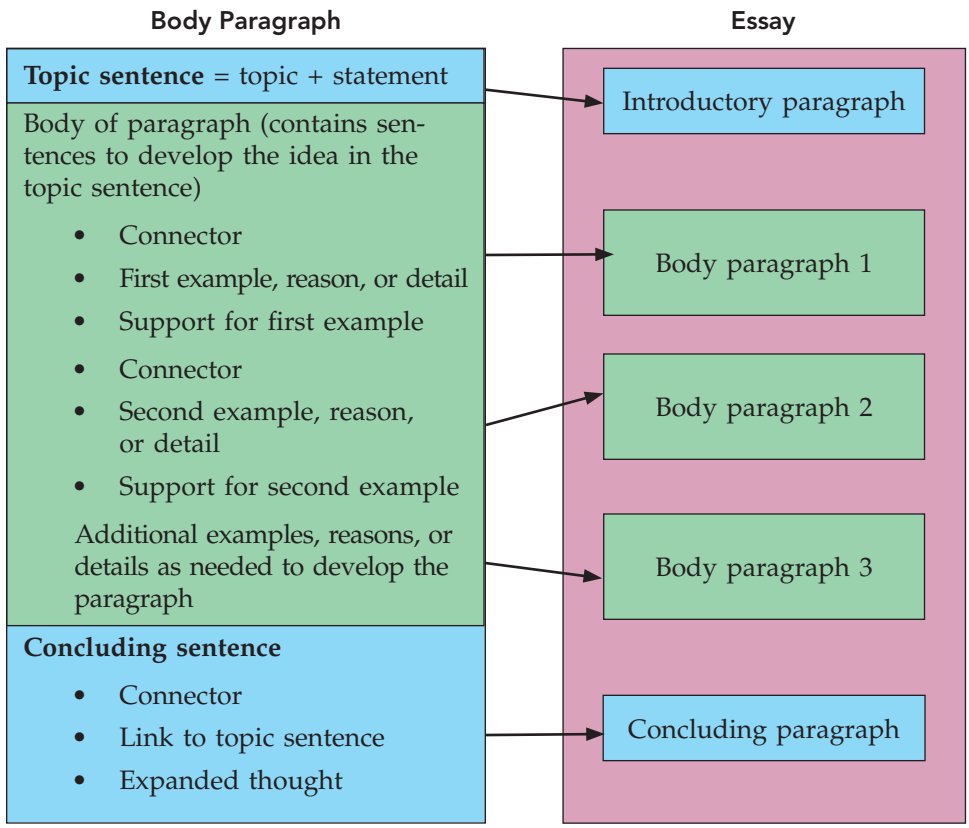
Defining the Essay

In Unit Four we worked extensively with paragraphs—focusing, organizing, developing, choosing the right wording, and editing closely. As you take the next step, writing essays, you will see that the same principles apply to writing in this longer form; you already know what you need to do this task well. This chapter reviews the fundamental principles of effective writing practiced in previous units, and it introduces two other specialty paragraphs: the introduction and the conclusion.

Examining Essay Form

Chapter 19 outlined key similarities between a body paragraph and an essay. Both should begin with a controlling point, grow through supporting, detailed examples and explanations, and end decisively. The following illustration will remind you how body paragraphs and essays are related:

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The body paragraph often begins with a **topic sentence** (main point); the essay begins with an **introductory paragraph** that usually contains a thesis sentence (main point), often positioned as the *last* sentence in the paragraph. Notice in the preceding illustration how the first arrow shows this relationship. Topic and thesis sentences are comparable, except that because essays are more fully developed, the thesis may need to accommodate additional points.

Body paragraphs that develop several primary examples begin each example with a **subtopic** sentence to introduce the main point. Similarly, body paragraphs

in essays often begin with a **topic** sentence to predict the main point (see the second, third, and fourth arrows in the preceding illustration). Both subtopic and topic sentences are then developed with detailed examples and explanations.

Body paragraphs end with one or two sentences; brief essays end with one paragraph, as you will notice from the fifth arrow in the previous illustration. In both cases the writer finishes by referring to the paper's main point, found in the paragraph's topic or essay's thesis sentence. Body paragraphs may summarize with a few words while essays often use a sentence or more.

Transitioning from Paragraph to Essay: Student Models

To see how a paragraph might grow into an essay, let's compare two versions of the student model "The Sharks of Steel," noting especially the beginnings, endings, and development.

Glancing between the paragraph and essay models, note their chief differences: **length**, **introduction**, and **conclusion**.

PARAGRAPH MODEL

Length: 145 words

Topic sentence

Subtopic sentence 1

Sentence for development

Subtopic sentence 2

Sentence for development

Subtopic sentence 3

Sentences for development

Concluding sentence

The Sharks of Steel

Submarines perform many useful tasks for civilians and the military. First of all, these ships help in rescue missions at sea. If a merchant ship develops a problem while away from land, a submarine might help with fighting fires, giving medical aid, or carrying the crew to safety. Next, submarines help with scientific research. For instance, they travel under the Arctic and Antarctic to study the ice pack, helping scientists to find out more about global warming. However, the most important use of submarines is in national security. Submarines travel with carrier battle groups all over the world to protect the Navy from hostile ships. Also, many submarines carry nuclear missiles, which may deter foreign powers from attacking our country. Even though the American submarine fleet has been reduced by two-thirds in the past 20 years, it still provides these valuable services to our country.

—Mikel King

The Sharks of Steel

Submarines—what a wonderful invention! Have you seen one lately? It isn't likely. Imagine a 42-foot-diameter tube that is longer than one and a half football fields. Toward the front of the sub, a 60-foot-high by 20-foot-long tower stands with a 30-foot wing on each side. Inside, the submarine contains four floors with 7-foot-high by 4-foot-wide corridors. Yes, this baby is nuclear powered with a pair of steam turbines and generators. It can travel faster than 20 knots (equivalent to 23 miles per hour) and submerge to a depth greater than 800 feet. So, what is this machine used for? Submarines are used to perform many useful tasks—both military and civilian.

First of all, the "silent service" (a nickname for the submarine force) can assist rescue operations while out at sea. At any time, merchant ships can develop problems that keep them from functioning properly or that threaten crew members' lives. Any land mass or even a Coast Guard station may be too far away for support. Most of the time other merchant ships capable of helping a stricken vessel may be days away. If a submarine is in the area, it can help with fire fighting, medical emergencies, and emergency transportation of crew members.

Second, submarines assist scientists with special research. For example, submarines travel under the Arctic and around the Antarctic to study the thickness of the ice pack to help scientists find out more about global warming. Other data that subs monitor are used by the scientific community to track the age, movement, and position of major ice formations. This information is shared globally to prevent ship collisions with ice. Most of the sound recordings are donated to marine biologists to help identify and track marine animals.

Finally, and most important, submarines are used to protect our national security. When special forces are needed in another

ESSAY MODEL

Length: 515 words

Introductory paragraph

Hook: First sentence arouses curiosity

Sentences for development

Thesis sentence

Topic sentence 1

Sentences for development

Topic sentence 2

Sentences for development

Topic sentence 3

Sentences for development

country, submarines can slip unseen close to a coastline and there deploy Navy Seals without surfacing. Submarines known as Fast Attacks also are used to protect other important ships and formations called carrier battle groups. However, the most feared and the most powerful of the fleet vessels are the Boomers, the submarines that carry nuclear missiles with 500 times the destructive capability of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, during World War II. These submarines are difficult to track and remind aggressive countries that they cannot strike the United States without deadly retaliation.

Rescue operations, help to the scientific community, and national security are some of the important tasks that submarines perform. These vessels are a tremendous asset to the country and should always be prepared to serve when needed. Unfortunately, the submarine fleet has been reduced by two-thirds in the past decade, and the remaining ships are aging, often overworked. If the country wants a powerful force to serve both civilians and the military, the people should remember how important the submarine fleet has been and urge Congress to provide the funding to carry the "silent service" well into the twenty-first century.

—*Mikel King*

Essays require a concluding paragraph with a connector, link to thesis, summary, and development.

Length

You can increase length in two ways: by adding examples and by developing them. The submarine paragraph of *145* words grew into an essay of *515* words not by using more main examples but by developing those already there.

HINT

See pp. 288–289 for a list of connectors.

Introduction

While the submarine paragraph relied on a single topic sentence to focus it, the essay's introductory paragraph does more. Even though the main point (thesis) is similar to the paragraph's topic sentence, the author added a **lead-in** sentence to hook the reader, then used several more sentences to inform and further draw the reader into the thesis.

Conclusion

Rather than ending with a single sentence, the submarine essay uses a concluding paragraph. Here again, much is familiar. The lead sentence begins with a connector, a brief summary of the essay's main points, and a link to the thesis (the usefulness of submarines). In addition, the author is able to express his feelings about the need for more financial support for the submarine fleet—adding to his expanded thought from the single paragraph.

The remainder of Chapter 30 explains how to transform simple paragraphs into more complex essays.

Writing Introductory Paragraphs

Introductory paragraphs are useful because they can arouse a reader's curiosity, encouraging him or her to read further. Introductory paragraphs contain the following three elements:

1. **Hook:** one sentence (the first sentence in the introductory paragraph)
2. **Development:** three or four sentences (the middle sentences)
3. **Thesis:** one sentence (often the last sentence in the introductory paragraph)

Writing the thesis first can help you focus both your essay and your introductory paragraph.



Even if your reader would not ordinarily be interested in your topic (or might be predisposed to dislike it), a well-written introduction may draw him or her into the points you want to make.

Crafting the Thesis Sentence

The thesis sentence is to the essay what the topic sentence is to the paragraph: namely, the focusing sentence. The thesis must be general enough to cover all points in the essay but specific enough to eliminate points that the writer will not deal with. This balance can sometimes be difficult to achieve. For example, where do you suppose the following thesis sentence might take us?

Vague thesis sentence: Naval vessels are part of the military for many countries.

Readers ask, "What kind of vessels, what part of the military, what countries, and what's the writer's point?" When thesis sentences don't name a specific topic or limit the topic with a statement, they force readers to guess at the meaning of an essay. Confused readers have little desire to read further.

However, notice how Mikel King gives direction to his paragraph and essay:

Topic sentence: Submarines perform many useful tasks for civilians and the military.

Thesis sentence: Submarines are used to perform many useful tasks—both military and civilian.

These sentences *focus* on submarines and *limit* the topic by stating that submarines are useful. Since Mikel did not add any further main examples to his essay, he did not change the substance of his topic sentence, instead polishing it a bit by using a dash for emphasis and rearranging the words *military* and *civilian*. Another option Mikel could have used is a **forecasting statement**, which often tells exactly what points will be discussed:

Thesis sentence + Forecasting: Submarines perform many useful tasks for civilians and the military, such as rescue missions, scientific research, and national security.

A thesis can be stretched over more than one sentence, placed in a paragraph other than the introduction, or even left unstated. For example, when trying to persuade a resistant audience, a writer might delay the thesis. However, to keep yourself and readers oriented in your essay, it helps to locate the thesis as the last sentence in the first paragraph.



Each model student essay in this text uses the last sentence in the first paragraph as a thesis statement.

THREE POINTS FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE THESIS

1. Limit the topic.
2. Make a clear statement about the topic.
3. Refine the statement through clear explanations, specific terms, action words, and sensory details.

Using Hooks

With a well-focused thesis in hand, you will have a good *end* to your introductory paragraph, but how will you move readers toward that thesis? The *first* sentence in your essay can help here. Called the **hook**, this sentence has the special job of arousing curiosity, moving your reader to explore further. Like a trail of bread crumbs, an introduction should lead your audience into the essay.

TWO POINTS FOR WRITING EFFECTIVE HOOKS

1. Avoid stating the obvious.
2. Say something that will interest your reader.

Here is how Mikel King hooks his audience in "Sharks of Steel":

Hook: Submarines—what a wonderful invention!

Mikel begins with a sentence of exclamation, followed by a question. Readers think: "Hmm, I wonder what the writer is so excited about?" Now the author has captured—momentarily—his readers' attention and can begin to draw them forward toward his thesis.

What Mikel does *not* do is begin with an obvious statement of fact, such as:

Weak hooks:

1. Submarines are vessels that travel underwater.
2. The oceans of the world are full of salt water and also have some submarines in them.
3. The Navy has vessels called submarines.

METHODS FOR CREATING STRONG HOOKS

1. Ask a question.
2. Begin with a line of dialogue.
3. Begin with a quotation.
4. Make a startling statement.
5. Present an unusual fact.
6. Begin a vivid image.

Here are hooks that "The Sharks of Steel" could have used:

Question: Have you ever seen a submarine close up?

Dialogue: "All hands below deck, dive, dive, dive!"

Quotation: "Without an operational fleet of submarines, the United States of America would be at the mercy of the world," Admiral Halsey proclaims.

Developing Introductions

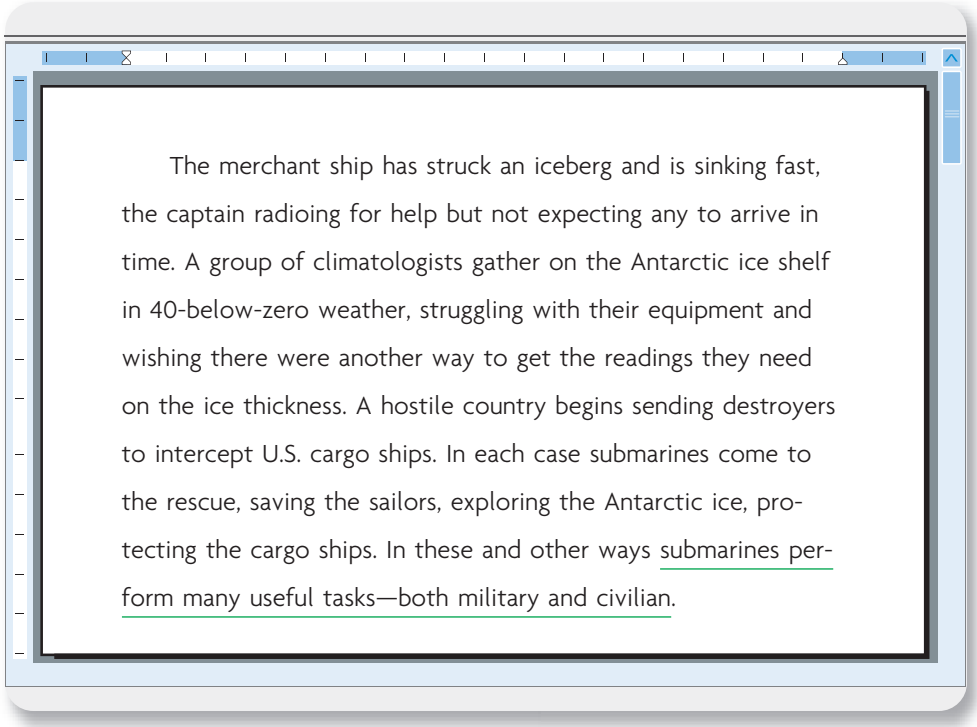
Once you have drawn readers into your introduction, you'll want to keep them moving ahead to your thesis and beyond. In general, remember that readers want to know why they should spend their time with any piece of writing. Show what's "in it" for them—that is, what useful information is forthcoming: perhaps the essay can help readers avoid a problem or will entertain them.

Here are a few methods that can help you write effective introductory paragraphs:

1. Description
2. Narration
3. Cause and effect
4. Question(s)
5. Background information/history (including why the topic is important to you)
6. Startling information
7. Combination of several methods

To show how a variety of these methods can work, let's try them out on "The Sharks of Steel." Notice that each example paragraph ends with the same thesis:

1. **Description:** Create a series of vivid images—perhaps three or four. Consider these images as quick snapshots rather than a continuous story. Use one or two sentences for each image, and develop each picture with actions, specific words, and sensory details. Also, you can build an image of some central part of your topic, as this writer does in describing the nuclear submarine:



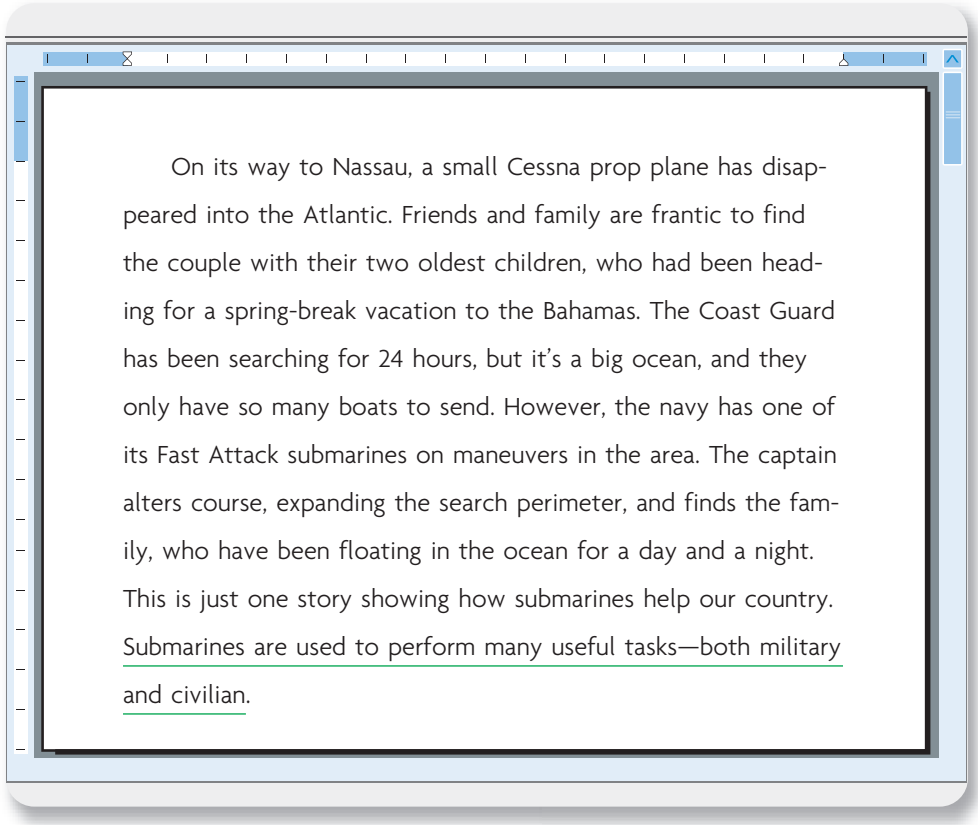
The merchant ship has struck an iceberg and is sinking fast, the captain radioing for help but not expecting any to arrive in time. A group of climatologists gather on the Antarctic ice shelf in 40-below-zero weather, struggling with their equipment and wishing there were another way to get the readings they need on the ice thickness. A hostile country begins sending destroyers to intercept U.S. cargo ships. In each case submarines come to the rescue, saving the sailors, exploring the Antarctic ice, protecting the cargo ships. In these and other ways submarines perform many useful tasks—both military and civilian.



The pronoun *you* can be appropriate in essays, especially in introductions and conclusions, but only when you intend to address the reader (see Chapter 7).

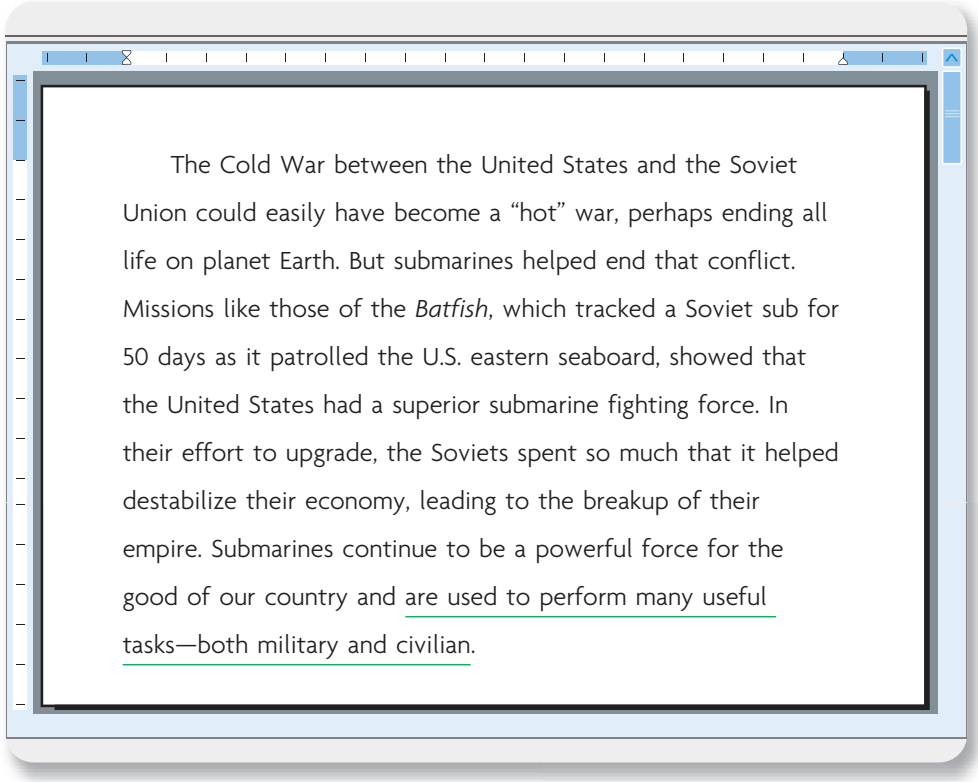
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2. **Narration:** Tell a brief story.



On its way to Nassau, a small Cessna prop plane has disappeared into the Atlantic. Friends and family are frantic to find the couple with their two oldest children, who had been heading for a spring-break vacation to the Bahamas. The Coast Guard has been searching for 24 hours, but it's a big ocean, and they only have so many boats to send. However, the navy has one of its Fast Attack submarines on maneuvers in the area. The captain alters course, expanding the search perimeter, and finds the family, who have been floating in the ocean for a day and a night. This is just one story showing how submarines help our country. Submarines are used to perform many useful tasks—both military and civilian.

3. **Cause and effect:** Explain causes leading to or effects leading from the topic. Or create a fictional scenario (what might happen) relating to your topic.



The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union could easily have become a "hot" war, perhaps ending all life on planet Earth. But submarines helped end that conflict. Missions like those of the *Batfish*, which tracked a Soviet sub for 50 days as it patrolled the U.S. eastern seaboard, showed that the United States had a superior submarine fighting force. In their effort to upgrade, the Soviets spent so much that it helped destabilize their economy, leading to the breakup of their empire. Submarines continue to be a powerful force for the good of our country and are used to perform many useful tasks—both military and civilian.

4. **Question(s):** Ask several questions of your reader that relate to your thesis.
5. **Background information:** Give information or history about your topic that would help orient your readers or show them why the topic is important to you.
6. **Startling information:** Give facts or statistics that might seem unusual or dramatic to your reader. Or create graphic examples that would cause an emotional response in your reader.
7. **Combination:** Focus on any introductory method, but then include other methods, as in the preceding examples.

As you can see, there are many interesting ways to write introductory paragraphs. The one you choose depends on your topic, purpose, and audience. A lively narrative or cause-and-effect beginning might work well in, say, an essay trying to persuade reluctant voters to go to the polls. On the other hand, listing needed materials or steps might be the best beginning for instructions in a car owner's manual, such as those for changing a tire or attaching a trailer.

Writing effective introductions requires the same attitude needed to create strong body paragraphs: a willingness to stretch your imagination, the energy to prewrite to discover the best approaches, and the insight to determine what the audience wants or needs to know.

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ACTIVITY 30.1 *Creating Interesting Introductions*

Choose one of the following thesis sentences or write one of your own; then create an introductory paragraph of around 100 words (five to seven sentences). Also, tell which introductory paragraph method(s) from the preceding list you used.

1. But the worst date I have ever been on took me completely by surprise.
2. I have come to classify friends as belonging to one of four groups.
3. Victoria was soon to find out what a bad decision dropping out of high school was.
4. Getting into good physical shape is not as difficult as many people imagine.
5. There are three major differences between the car that I have and the one I dream about owning.



Think about whom you would want to read your introduction. Be sure to begin with an interesting hook and end with a thesis.

Avoiding Weak Introductions

Introductions can go wrong in one or several ways. Try to avoid the following problems:

1. **Beginning with an obvious statement:**

   NOT THIS: I awoke in the morning as I usually do.

   OR THIS: Some people smoke cigarettes.

   BUT THIS: I awoke with a pounding headache and a feeling that the day was headed for disaster.

   OR THIS: People who smoke cigarettes are slowly committing suicide.

2. **Stating that you are getting ready to write an essay about something:**

   NOT THIS: In this essay I will tell you about . . .

   OR THIS: The first part of my essay will discuss . . . and the next paragraph will say . . .

3. **Apologizing for lack of expertise:**

   NOT THIS: I don't know that much about this subject but . . .

   OR THIS: People who really know about this subject might laugh at what I have to say. . . .

   Writers ask readers for their time. If a writer begins by telling readers that an essay is not worth reading, why should an audience waste time with the essay?

4. **Needlessly repeating information:**

   NOT THIS: Spanking children is a questionable method of discipline. Parents who spank their children may not be doing the right thing. Children who are spanked may not do well with this form of punishment.

   Each sentence in an introduction should *build on* and *add to* the previous one, not just repeat it.

5. **Using clichés and worn expressions like the following:**

   NOT THIS: I sat in the dentist's chair for what seemed like an eternity.

   BUT THIS: I sat in the dentist's chair for two long, painful hours.

6. **Writing an overly long or too-short introduction.** Introductions should be proportionate to the rest of the work. A book, for instance, might need a chapter-length introduction while an essay of fifteen pages might need only a paragraph or two. An introduction for a brief essay like the ones we are writing can be well developed in five to seven sentences, about 100 words.

ACTIVITY 30.2 *Recognizing and Revising Weak Introductions*

Explain why the following introduction is ineffective. Then revise it to make it stronger.

> My college campus has students. Some of these students smoke. I don't know much about campus security issues or how hard it would be for security to issue tickets, but I think that they should issue $1 fines to every student they catch throwing cigarette butts on the ground. Well, maybe not $1; maybe that's too much but then again maybe not. That could be just the right amount because students could afford it but wouldn't much like it. I wouldn't want to put security between a rock and a hard place by asking them to issue fines that students couldn't pay. Anyway, like I said, I'm going to write this essay about student smokers who are students on this campus and who throw their cigarette butts on the ground.



Some writers prefer to draft using only a thesis for focus and then create an introduction after the body is complete.

CREATING INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS—SUMMING UP

1. Write out a working thesis sentence.
2. Skim the introductory paragraph methods (pp. 447–449), the methods for writing a hook (pp. 446–447), and the tips for avoiding weak introductions (p. 450).
3. Prewrite using one or more of the introductory paragraph methods.
4. Draft your introduction.

Writing Body Paragraphs

Introductory paragraphs take the first step of attracting and then focusing a reader, but then the writer must follow through, keeping the essay interesting. We do this in the **body paragraphs**, where we present most of our information.

Like stand-alone paragraphs, essay body paragraphs begin with a topic sentence and sometimes end with a summarizing (or concluding) sentence. Also, you will sometimes find subtopic sentences useful, depending on how many points you want to develop in the paragraph. Whereas our stand-alone paragraphs were around 200 to 250 words, now we will reduce the length of body paragraphs to approximately 150 words each.

Body paragraphs have three main parts:

1. **Topic sentence:** connector + topic + statement (first sentence)
2. **Development:** four to six sentences (middle sentences)
3. **Summary sentence** (optional): restates paragraph's main idea (last sentence)



For a review of subtopic sentences, go to Chapter 23.

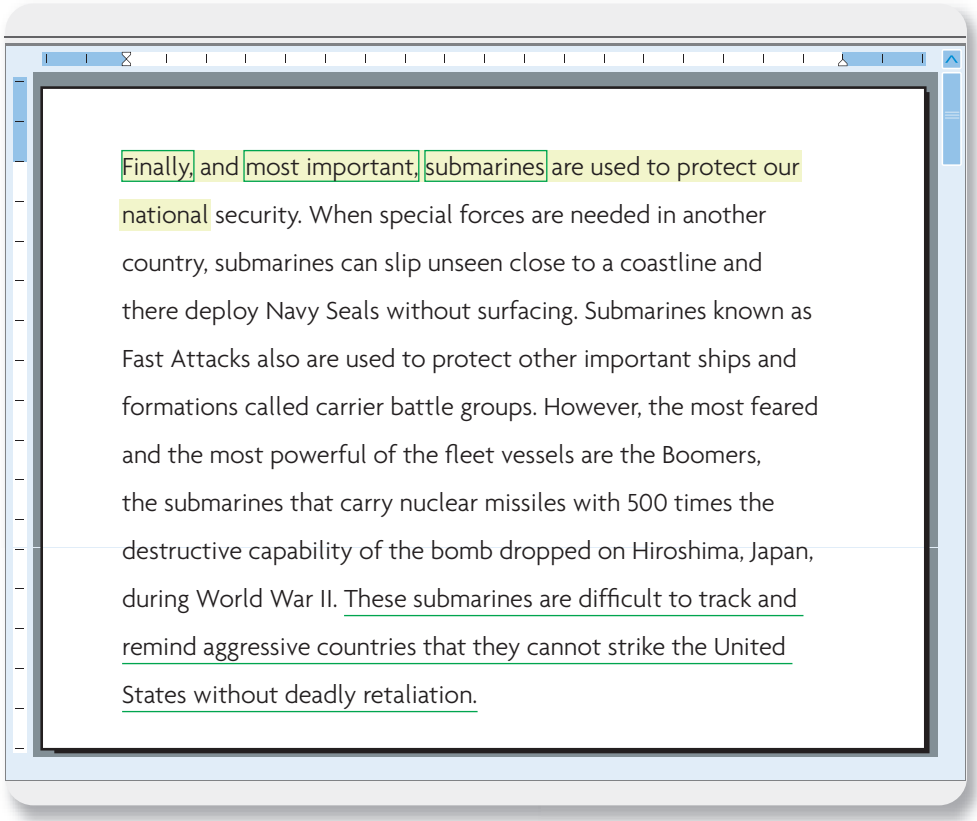
Using Topic and Summary Sentences in Body Paragraphs

Topic sentences refine the thesis, offering the *more specific* points or examples from which the essay will grow. Within each topic sentence it is important to name and focus each example or point and link the sentence to the paragraph preceding it.

Notice how the topic sentence below uses several connectors to bridge the gap between paragraphs and links the main example (national security) to the usefulness of submarines mentioned in the thesis.



To review methods for coherence, see Chapters 9 and 19.



Finally, and most important, submarines are used to protect our national security. When special forces are needed in another country, submarines can slip unseen close to a coastline and there deploy Navy Seals without surfacing. Submarines known as Fast Attacks also are used to protect other important ships and formations called carrier battle groups. However, the most feared and the most powerful of the fleet vessels are the Boomers, the submarines that carry nuclear missiles with 500 times the destructive capability of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, during World War II. These submarines are difficult to track and remind aggressive countries that they cannot strike the United States without deadly retaliation.

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To conclude longer body paragraphs, writers sometimes create a **summary sentence** like the one underlined above. These sentences can be useful because they reinforce an author's message, but in short paragraphs they can become repetitive. You must judge for yourself when summary sentences will be effective in your essays.

Developing Body Paragraphs



In "The Sharks of Steel," the effects of the submarine are kinds of the help it gives.

Whether expanding a former single-paragraph assignment or beginning an essay from scratch, you need to develop your main points, which you do through detailed examples and explanations (see Chapter 19) and by asking yourself "How can I more clearly show my reader what I am saying?"

Comparing one major example (subtopic) from the paragraph version of "The Sharks of Steel" to one body paragraph in the essay, we can see how one writer uses details and explanations to make his paragraph grow; the subtopic sentence from a single paragraph becomes the topic sentence of a body paragraph:

SINGLE PARAGRAPH SUBTOPIC

First of all, these ships help in rescue missions at sea. If a merchant ship develops a problem while away from land, a submarine might help with fighting fires, giving medical aid, or carrying the crew to safety.

ESSAY BODY PARAGRAPH

First of all, the "silent service" (a nickname for the submarine force) can assist rescue operations while out at sea. At any time, merchant ships can develop problems that keep them from functioning properly or that threaten crew members' lives. Any land mass or even a Coast Guard station may be too far away for support. Most of the time other merchant ships capable of helping a stricken vessel may be days away. If a submarine is in the area, it can help with fire fighting, medical emergencies, and emergency transportation of crew members.

Notice how the single-paragraph subtopic has grown from *38* words to *94* in the essay body paragraph. The author focused the main idea of usefulness of submarines—specifically in helping civilian ships at sea—and found more detailed examples and explanations, using several prewriting methods from Chapter 1 (clustering, listing, freewriting) and the **patterns of development** of *illustration* and *cause and effect*.

Most effective writing uses many patterns, often mixing several in each paragraph:

PARAGRAPH PATTERNS

1. **Description:** using vivid details to show something about a subject
2. **Narration:** telling a brief story to make a point about a subject
3. **Illustration:** giving examples to illustrate some point

4. **Classification/division:** grouping a subject or separating it from others like it
5. **Cause/effect:** telling what actions affect a subject or what effects flow from it
6. **Process analysis:** telling how a subject works
7. **Comparison/contrast:** showing how a subject is like and unlike similar subjects
8. **Definition:** telling the essential characteristics of a subject
9. **Persuasion:** trying to move someone to agreement or action

ACTIVITY 30.3 *Developing Body Paragraphs*

Revise the following underdeveloped body paragraph, using several **patterns of development, detailed examples**, and **explanations**. Try for a paragraph of six to eight sentences.

> Another good reason to wait for a year or two between high school and college is money. Many high school seniors can't afford college expenses. If they live economically and save for 2 years, they can afford to work fewer hours, which will help them do better in their college subjects.



Remember that description and narration can build images that include people acting in a setting.

Arranging Body Paragraphs within Essays

Positioning body paragraphs in essays is much like organizing subtopics within single-paragraph papers.

A writer might choose any of these three organizational patterns:

- **Spatial:** describing a subject/place from front to back, side to side, top to bottom, and so on. You might, for example, describe your dream house as you approach, walk into, and then move through it.
- **Chronological:** relating a series of actions in time order. Personal narrative, fiction, and process descriptions use this method.
- **Order of importance:** arranging points from least to most (or most to least) dramatic. Expository writing and persuasive pieces often use this method (see "The Sharks of Steel," in this chapter).



For more on these patterns of organization, see Chapter 19 (and Chapters 21–29).

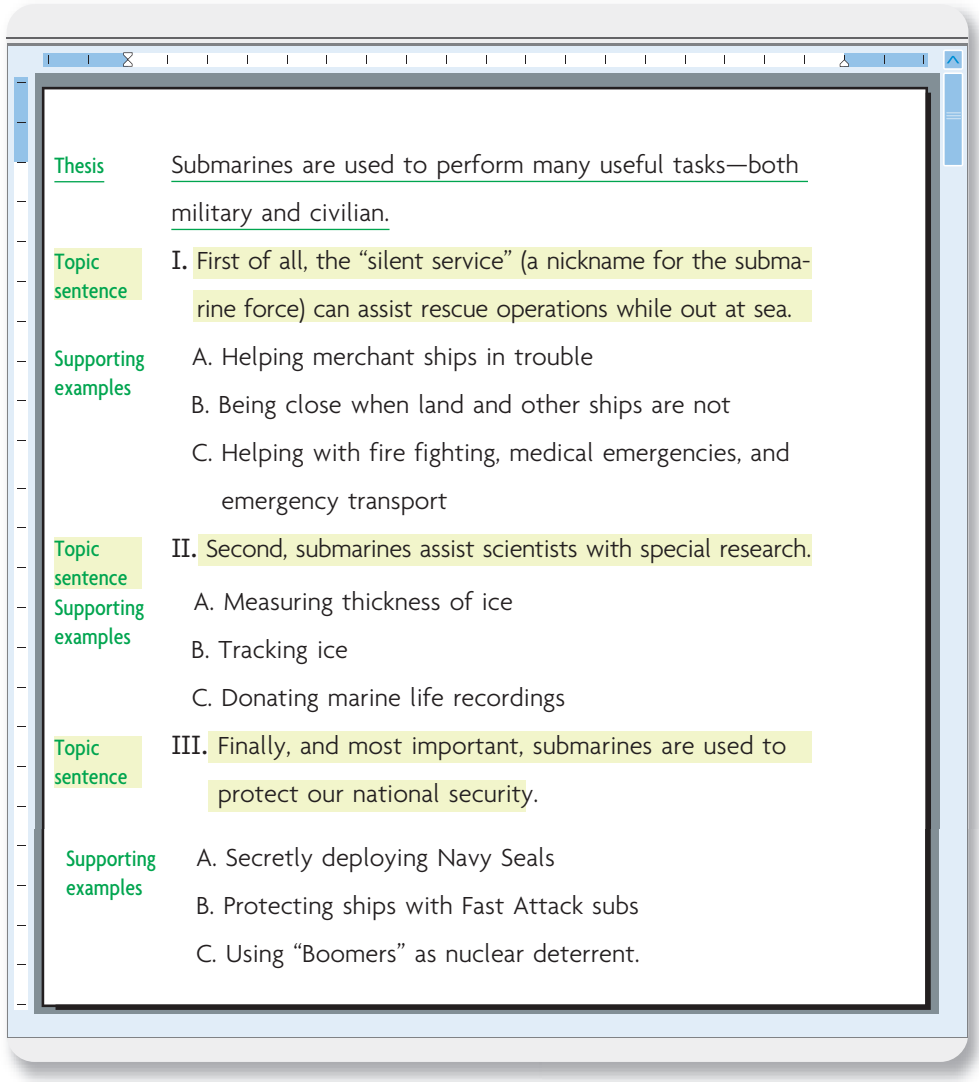
Remember that writers may use one of the preceding overall arrangement methods but then arrange material by another method within a paragraph.

Using Outlines

Another aid in organizing essays is the outline. Our paragraph assignments from Unit Four often used short lists as organizational tools, but because even brief essays are more complex than single paragraphs, simple outlines can help keep them on track. A formal sentence outline is probably not needed for short essays, but listing primary examples and several supporting points can be useful.

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INFORMAL WORKING OUTLINE FOR "THE SHARKS OF STEEL"



Thesis: Submarines are used to perform many useful tasks—both military and civilian.

Topic sentence — I. First of all, the "silent service" (a nickname for the submarine force) can assist rescue operations while out at sea.

Supporting examples
- A. Helping merchant ships in trouble
- B. Being close when land and other ships are not
- C. Helping with fire fighting, medical emergencies, and emergency transport

Topic sentence — II. Second, submarines assist scientists with special research.

Supporting examples
- A. Measuring thickness of ice
- B. Tracking ice
- C. Donating marine life recordings

Topic sentence — III. Finally, and most important, submarines are used to protect our national security.

Supporting examples
- A. Secretly deploying Navy Seals
- B. Protecting ships with Fast Attack subs
- C. Using "Boomers" as nuclear deterrent.

HINT

For an example of a single-paragraph outline, see Chapter 1.

Refer to your thesis often. However detailed you decide to make your outline, be sure to list at least the main examples along with supporting examples and details.

Writing Concluding Paragraphs

Like introductions, conclusions often pose challenges to essay writers. How can we leave our readers feeling that the promise made in the thesis has been met and that the essay is decisively completed?

One solution is to *plan* a concluding paragraph. Though many longer works use several paragraphs or even a chapter to conclude, we need only five to seven sentences (100 words or so) for short essays. As you draft the concluding paragraph, be sure to create strong links to the introductory paragraph.

Concluding paragraphs should include the following elements:

1. **Lead sentence:** one sentence (connector + link to thesis)
2. **Summary:** one sentence or less
3. **Development:** three or four sentences (often contains an expanded thought)

Crafting Lead and Summary Sentences

Just as introductory and body paragraphs have a **lead sentence** (the "hook" and the topic sentence, respectively), so do concluding paragraphs. Careful writers often begin the first sentence of their conclusion with a connector, touch on the thesis, and then state a brief **summary** of the essay's main points. Alternately, the summary can be placed in the second sentence.

Lead sentence with summary: Rescue operations, help to the scientific community, and national security are some of the important tasks that submarines perform.

The author could have written his lead and summary sentences differently—for instance, by saving the summary words for a second sentence:

Lead sentence with delayed summary: Submarines are a tremendous asset to the country and should always be prepared to serve when needed. Rescue operations, help to the scientific community, and national security are just some of the important tasks that submarines perform.

The beginning of a concluding paragraph eases the reader out of the main stream of a writer's ideas and into the final comments or observations that wrap up the essay.

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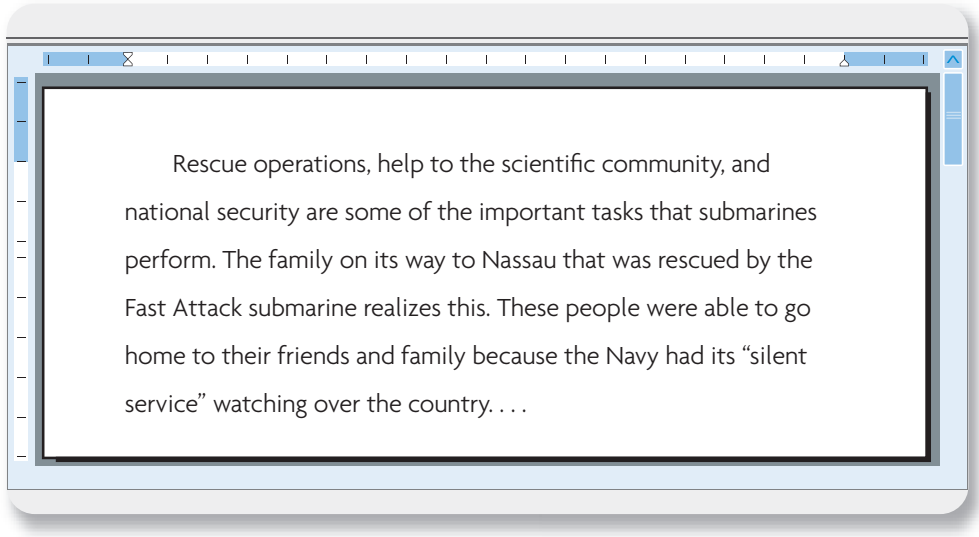
Developing Conclusions

After leading the reader into the concluding paragraph, end the essay decisively, rather than tacking on half a dozen empty, repetitive sentences. The following strategies will help you develop strong conclusions:

1. **Frame:** Return to the image, comparison, story, or other element from the introductory paragraph.
2. **Use an expanded thought:**
   a. Express an emotion.
   b. Give a judgment, opinion, or evaluation.
   c. Show how something has affected your behavior or outlook on life.
   d. Ask a related question.
   e. Make a reflective statement.
   f. Suggest a course of action.
   g. Combine several methods.

Framing the Essay

When writers "frame" an essay, they revisit the patterns of development used in the introduction (description, narration, and so on) and then reframe that passage or idea in the conclusion, adding or elaborating to reinforce the point. To frame "The Sharks of Steel" with a concluding paragraph that refers to the narrative introduction on page 448, we could begin like this:



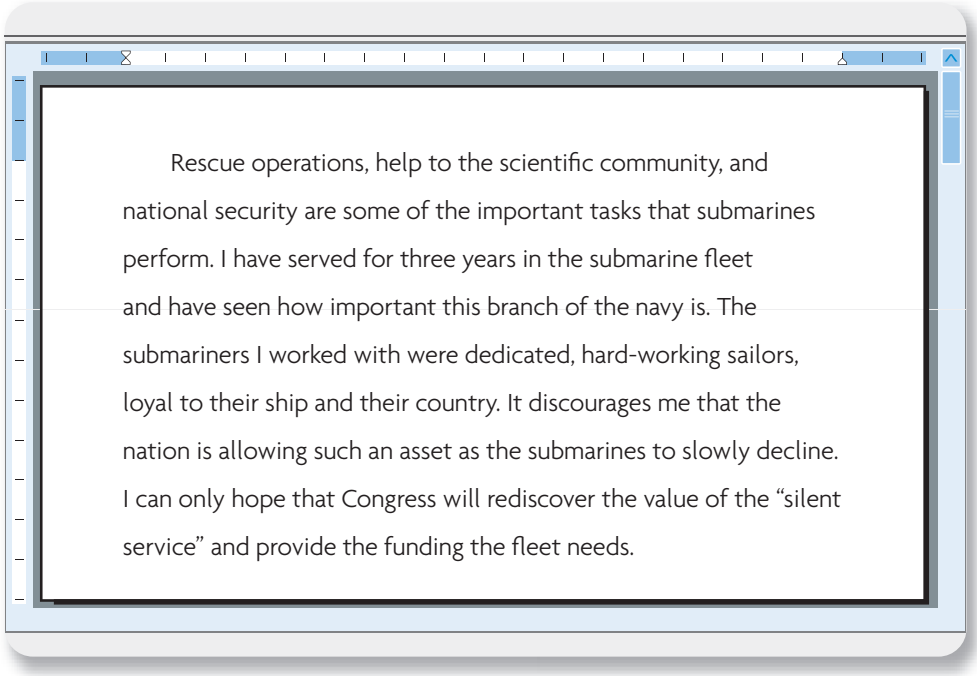


We used expanded thoughts to end single paragraphs in Unit Four, but an essay gives writers more room to develop the final point.

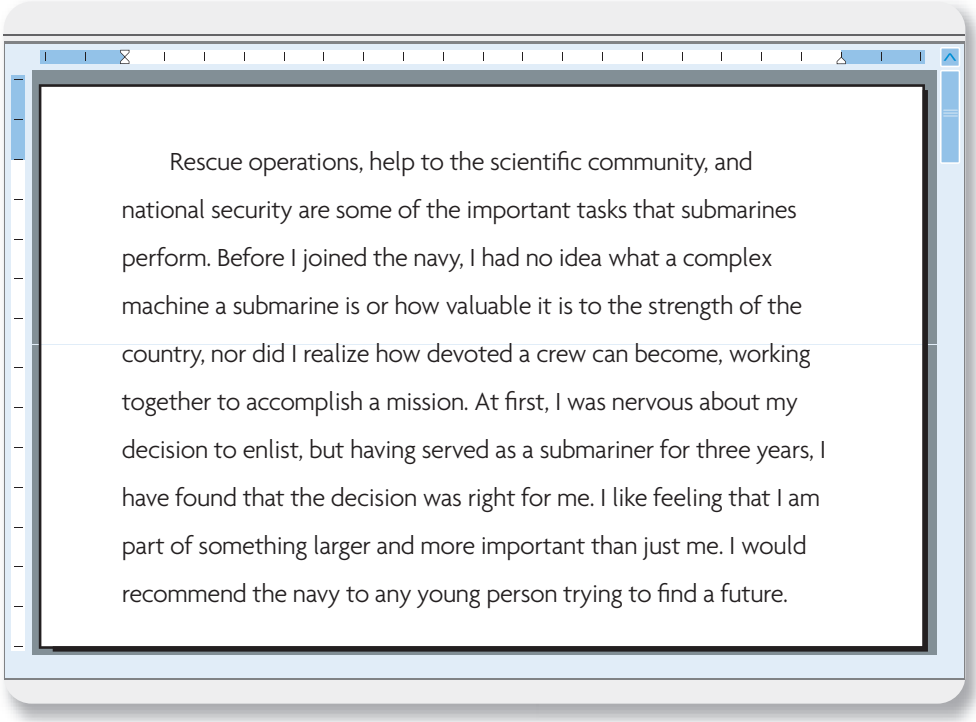
Concluding with an Expanded Thought

Another way to end an essay decisively is with an **expanded thought**, taking the audience one step beyond the ideas in the body paragraphs. Following are several examples of how an expanded thought could work in "The Sharks of Steel":

1. **Personal emotion:** Let your reader know how you feel about your topic. What emotional response has it created in you?

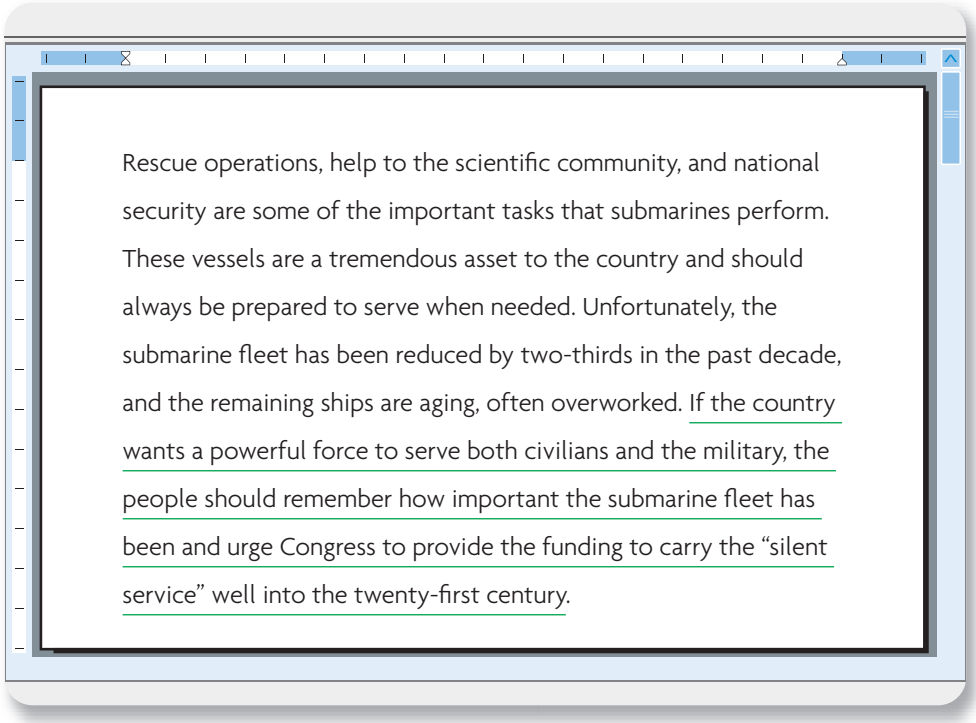


2. **Judgment:** Evaluate your topic, or express an opinion.
3. **Outlook or behavior modification:** Show how your experience with the topic has affected your behavior or outlook on life:



Rescue operations, help to the scientific community, and national security are some of the important tasks that submarines perform. Before I joined the navy, I had no idea what a complex machine a submarine is or how valuable it is to the strength of the country, nor did I realize how devoted a crew can become, working together to accomplish a mission. At first, I was nervous about my decision to enlist, but having served as a submariner for three years, I have found that the decision was right for me. I like feeling that I am part of something larger and more important than just me. I would recommend the navy to any young person trying to find a future.

4. **Question(s):** Ask one or more questions that might grow from your topic.
5. **Reflective statement:** Tell your reader something that your topic suggests to you beyond the points made in the body paragraphs. Think of some larger or more general application to the world around you.
6. **Call to action:** Suggest that your reader or someone else act on the information you have presented. This is the method Mikel King used to conclude "The Sharks of Steel."



Rescue operations, help to the scientific community, and national security are some of the important tasks that submarines perform. These vessels are a tremendous asset to the country and should always be prepared to serve when needed. Unfortunately, the submarine fleet has been reduced by two-thirds in the past decade, and the remaining ships are aging, often overworked. If the country wants a powerful force to serve both civilians and the military, the people should remember how important the submarine fleet has been and urge Congress to provide the funding to carry the "silent service" well into the twenty-first century.

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7. **Combination:** Combine several methods. Notice that the preceding call-to-action conclusion (method 6) also expresses an opinion ("vessels are a tremendous asset") and implies an emotional response ("unfortunately"). Method 1 for concluding an essay expresses emotion but also implies some action on the part of Congress. Method 3 expresses emotion and also offers a recommendation.



ACTIVITY 30.4 WORKING TOGETHER: *Identifying an Expanded Thought*

Seeing the expanded thought in others' essays can help you create an expanded thought in your own. For the essays listed below (from Chapter 31), write the thesis sentence, and then work in pairs to summarize the final expanded thought in the space provided.

EXAMPLE: "The Sharks of Steel" (p. 443)

Thesis sentence: *Submarines are used to perform many useful tasks—both military and civilian.*

Expanded thought: *People should lobby Congress to more fully fund the submarine fleet.*

1. "Fear in My Early Years" (p. 471)

   Thesis sentence: _____

   Expanded thought: _____

2. "Driven to Drive in Midlife" (p. 474)

   Thesis sentence: _____

   Expanded thought: _____

3. "He Was My Friend" (p. 489)

   Thesis sentence: _____

   Expanded thought: _____

ACTIVITY 30.5 *Creating Interesting Conclusions*

Using the introductory paragraph that you wrote in Activity 30.1, brainstorm to uncover several main examples for an essay that could grow from it. Next, on separate paper, write two concluding paragraphs, one using a frame and the other using any of the seven methods, including a combination, for expanding the final thought.

1. Concluding paragraph using frame

   Lead sentence: _____

   Summary sentence: _____

   Development: _____

   _____

2. Concluding paragraph using expanded thought (list one method number: _____)

   Lead sentence: _____

   Summary sentence: _____

   Development: _____

   _____

Avoiding Weak Conclusions

Even knowing how to write a strong final paragraph, writers sometimes stumble at the end of their essays, slipping into problems like the following:

1. **Under- or oversummarizing (and repeating):** Most conclusions contain some kind of summary: the longer and more complex the essay, the longer and more detailed the summary might be. However, in brief essays, the reader does not need much repeating of main points. A single sentence ought to be enough.
2. **Telling their readers that they are about to end their essay:** While you should connect the first sentence of your conclusion to the final body paragraph, avoid doing it with statements like these: "OK, that's about it; I've said all I need to" or "In conclusion, I want to end my essay with this thought."
3. **Moving into an unrelated or too loosely related topic:** An expanded thought should grow naturally from the body of the essay. It should be an extension of the thesis, not a different topic altogether.
4. **Overgeneralizing:** Expressing opinions and evaluating can be effective concluding strategies. However, it is important to qualify statements, so you don't claim more than you can prove. Avoid assertions like "The United States will always be the world's most powerful nation" or "The Sierra Club is just a bunch of confused tree huggers." Instead say, "The United States will continue *for some time* to be . . ." and "The Sierra Club has *some* confused. . . ."
5. **Apologizing:** Apologizing is another ineffective concluding strategy: "Well, even if I haven't got all the facts straight, I think you can see why I'm right about this issue." Your conclusion should convey confidence. If you have serious doubts about your essay, why not revise it?
6. **Using clichés and worn expressions:** Beware of clichés like "a slap on the hand" and "a chill running down my spine." If you can't think of a fresh figure of speech, just use a literal phrase. For example, say "mild discipline" in place of the hand-slap cliché.
7. **Making your conclusion too long or too short:** Conclusions should be written in proportion to the rest of the work. A book might require a concluding chapter, but an essay of fifteen pages might need only a paragraph or two. Our brief essays can support a final paragraph of five to seven sentences, or about 100 words.



For more on qualifying, see Chapter 29.

ACTIVITY 30.6 WORKING TOGETHER: *Recognizing and Revising Weak Conclusions*



Working in groups, explain why the following conclusion is ineffective, and then revise to make it stronger. *Alternately,* trade drafts of your own in-progress essays, and respond to classmates' conclusions.

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So as I am starting on my conclusion, I just want to summarize the points that I made in the body of my essay when I told you, my readers, that I favor a $1 fine (I think) for students who toss their trashy cigarette butts anywhere but (no pun intended) in a proper waste container. I've already said (in paragraph 3 I think) that campus security could probably, maybe, issue the citations without too much trouble, and most students would pay up if, as a motivator, they weren't allowed in classes or were denied access to their transcripts. No one would object to my proposal because it is sensible. If we could just get the ball rolling, we could make this proposal fly, and all of us who hate smoking with a passion would no longer be caught between a rock and a hard place.

CREATING CONCLUDING PARAGRAPHS—SUMMING UP

1. Review your thesis sentence and main points in the body paragraphs.
2. Review lead sentences.
3. Draft a lead sentence and summary that link to your thesis sentence and main points.
4. Review the methods for expanding a thought and avoiding weak conclusions.
5. Decide on a frame and/or an expanded thought.
6. Prewrite, focusing on a method for expanding a thought.
7. Draft the rest of your conclusion.



USE RECYCLED PAPER

If you are using a personal printer, choose recycled paper. If you need to print out a draft (for your own use), reuse the blank sides of paper you no longer need. •

Creating Coherence

Unit Four showed how critical it is to link words within and between sentences, especially between subtopic sentences, to create **coherence**. Essays also require strong connectors, particularly *between* paragraphs.

FOUR WAYS TO CREATE COHERENCE

1. **Transitions:** using categories of linking words like the following:
   - Locating or moving in space: *above, against, around, behind, below, on, in*
   - Moving in time: *after, at last, awhile, first, next, now, often, then*

- Adding material: *again, also, and, in addition, furthermore, as well as*
- Giving examples: *for example, for instance, another, one reason, in fact*
- Comparing: *alike, also, both, in the same way, similarly*
- Contrasting: *in contrast, although, but, differs from, even though, however*
- Cause/effect: *and so, as a result, because, consequently, since, so, then*
- Summarizing/concluding: *finally, in brief, in other words, in short*

2. **Repetition:** repeating a significant word from a preceding sentence
3. **Synonyms:** using a word equivalent to one in a preceding sentence
4. **Pronouns:** using words like *she, they, that, this, those, some, each*



For more on coherence methods, turn to Chapter 19.

Selecting a Title

Titles are important because they represent the rest of your work. They are like a first greeting. If someone you meet barely looks at you, mumbles, or walks away after a few moments, how interested will you be in getting to know the person better? Dull, misleading, or missing titles make the same sort of poor impression. Readers are less inclined to give an essay attention when they feel that the author doesn't care much about it either.

The following strategies will help you create an effective title when you are polishing your essay:

1. Keep the title short—one to eight words. Remember that titles are almost never complete sentences and that they follow the capitalization rules in Chapter 17.
2. Link the title to your main idea, point, or dominant impression.
3. Use one or more of the following approaches:
   - Create an image: use a metaphor/simile, specific words, action words, and/or sensory details.
   - Ask a question.
   - Make a play on words.
   - Refer to something that your reader might know and find interesting.



For more on titles, see Chapter 19.

ACTIVITY 30.7 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Making an Essay Plan***

Follow the steps outlined as Key Topics on page 440 of this chapter to make a plan for an essay version of any paragraph-long comment on the article "If You Text in Class, This Prof Will Leave" at http://insidehighered.com/news/2008/04/02/texting. Remember, you don't have to write the essay itself—just the plan for it.



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ACTIVITY 30.8 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Paragraph to Essay Review***

Take the Chapter 30 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. An essay is a group of related paragraphs that develop an overall point.
2. Like a single body paragraph, an essay requires an introduction, substantive development, and a conclusion.
3. The main differences between a single-paragraph paper and an essay are length, introduction, and conclusion.
4. Introductory paragraphs usually consist of a hook, development, and thesis.
5. A thesis sentence is to the essay what a topic sentence is to the body paragraph.
6. Methods for developing introductions include description, narration, cause and effect, questions, background information, startling information, and a mix of these.
7. Body paragraphs often begin with topic sentences and sometimes end with summary sentences.
8. Concluding paragraphs consist of a lead sentence, summary, and development.
9. Concluding paragraphs may be developed in several ways, including using a frame and/or an expanded thought.
10. Essays should be both unified (all material is relevant) and coherent (all sentences are clearly linked).
11. A title is an important finishing touch, and there are strategies for creating interesting ones.

Model Student Essays 31

[*How does reading paragraphs or essays by other students help you in writing your own papers? Do you find it more useful to read models by professional writers or by your peers? (Note: There is no "right" answer to this question.)*]



KEY TOPICS

- Description essay
- Narration essay
- Illustration essay
- Cause and effect essay
- Process description essay
- Comparison/contrast essay
- Classification essay
- Definition essay
- Persuasion essay

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

This chapter offers a collection of student model essays to help you practice what you have learned with the paragraph assignments in Unit Four and the introduction to the essay from Chapter 30. As you work with these essays, keep in mind that the patterns of development (PODs) illustrated here are simply ways of naming and organizing everyday patterns by which people have always communicated. Beneath the surface of each POD, you will find detailed examples and explanations to be the main ways that ideas are developed and information presented.

Remember that introductory and concluding paragraphs are "specialty" paragraphs that usually require extra effort on the writer's part. Read the models closely and decide for yourself how successful these students have been.

Description



For a detailed discussion of description, turn to Chapter 21.

Description helps people understand what a person, place, or thing is like. Using specific details and often organizing those details spatially (in order from side to side, front to back, top to bottom, and so forth), writers try to engage a reader's five senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. Subjective descriptions usually focus their details with a **dominant impression,** or the point that writers want readers to understand about a subject.

As you read the following essay, note on the lines below how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT DESCRIPTIVE ELEMENTS

1. Specific language
2. Sensory detail
3. Dominant impression
4. Spatial order
5. Space and time transitions

Back to the Garden

Loud rock-and-roll; people swarming through the front door of Houlihan's, impatient to be seated; and late nights with my face stuck in a textbook—my life is jammed. At 23 it seems that I ought to have a little more breathing space than I have managed, but I'm trying to get my life more together. My band may never be the next Radiohead, and I don't think I'm going to get rich waiting tables, so I'm giving college another try. But sometimes I wonder if it's all worth it. Sometimes I need a break from my world of constant rushing and guitar riffs; that's when I head for the tranquility and beauty of the Antioch Park rose garden. 1

I enter the garden from the south and stroll leisurely along the red brick walkway bordered by dark-green bushes labeled burkwood viburnums. Small songbirds and some sparrows flutter about inside the bushes. Some of the birds seem to be nesting, and I imagine new life soon emerging into the spring sunshine. A moment later the bushes give way to beds of roses: vibrant deep red, yellow, orange, and pink. Some are only knee-high; others climb dark metal trellises higher than I can reach. The brick pathway blends into concrete steps and a cement and wooden arbor, beneath which are several stone benches for sitting and admiring the beauty of the garden. 2

As I rest for a moment, I look west toward a marble fountain and see the water arch up, break into glistening drops, and splash down into a pool of lily pads, many of their bright yellow blossoms floating around the pool's edges. I single out individual droplets flashing in the sunlight and follow them on their downward journey. I drift, pleasantly mesmerized. 3

Getting up, I stroll toward the fountain, the heart of the garden, passing from the cool shade of the arbor into the relaxing warmth of the sun. The roses, mostly red and yellow, are waist high along this section of the brick walk and overhang the path leading to the water. All of the beds are newly mulched in brownish-orange cedar chips, giving a pleasant scent to the air and reminding me of an old cedar chest in the room I always slept in when the family visited Gran on the farm. Bordering the cement circle that surrounds the fountain is a planting of orange and yellow marigolds perhaps 18 inches wide and only ankle high. A butterfly with blue-black wings hovers a few inches above them. 4

Here at the center of the rose garden, I sit leaning with my back toward the fountain, lulled by the gentle sound of falling water, feeling an occasional mist of spray on my neck, just enough to keep me from falling asleep. With hands clasped around one knee, I follow the brick 5

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walkway due west with my eyes 50 yards across a field of spring-green grass to the maple and oak trees that mark the park's boundary. Several squirrels are overturning leaves and digging in the grass for their lunch, no doubt acorns they buried last fall. The animals in this garden are in no more hurry than I am; they know they are safe here in their garden home.

However, as much as I would like to stay in my place of ease, I have a dinner shift to work. 6
I drag my wrist upward to see the time: 3:15, my break is over. As I retrace my path toward my car, I find myself once again refreshed by the rose garden, one of the few places I can come to be by myself and collect my thoughts. Waiting tables in a high-volume restaurant, playing in my band, and taking 12 hours in college has filled my life to overflowing. I prize the moments I can snatch out of my busy schedule to simply slow down and be.

—Michael Wolfe

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development.
3. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
4. What details help to reinforce the dominant impression?
5. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture the garden.
6. What one point can you add to make this description even more vivid?

Narration

Narration is the telling of an event. Sometimes the event is fictional, sometimes it is true and happening to someone else (second-hand narrative), and sometimes it has happened to us (personal narrative). When we write narratives, we tell what really happened (sometimes "stretching" facts to make them more interesting) in a way that highlights **conflict,** builds **suspense,** and brings the story to a **climax** with a resolution that reveals some **point.**

As you read the following essay, note on the lines below how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT NARRATIVE ELEMENTS

1. Conflict
2. Suspense
3. Climax
4. Significance (point)
5. Showing and telling
6. Dialogue



For a detailed discussion of narration, turn to Chapter 22.

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I Thought I Could

"Who will move the calf?" my mother asked as she hung up the phone. "That was Amy, and she said that the hay is getting cut, so Kit needs to be put back in his pen." 1

Kit was the half-grown Angus steer that my older sister and brother Amy and Michael had raised from a newborn. They helped out at a nearby ranch, and Kit, who was orphaned when born, was a gift for their work. They built a pen for him on our 15 acres of land, which included a yard and hayfield. 2

"I'll get him," I said eagerly. I was 8 years old and had helped Amy and Michael with Kit a lot through the 6 months that we had had him. 3

"Hannah, no, wait for me and David to help you," my other older sister, Laura, said. She and David always thought I was too little for tasks like this. But I felt determined that I was big enough and strong enough to do it. I pulled on my shoes and left the house. Laura and my other older brother, David, lazily followed behind me. 4

I felt very important as I untied Kit's red halter from the stake. Holding the leather halter firmly, I took one step toward the pen when Kit suddenly broke into a run. Panic seized me as I tried to run along with him and pull him to a stop. But he only sped up, and I was pulled to the ground and dragged along behind him. Kit was now racing away from the house, and I was filled with terror because I was chest down on the ground, flying through the hayfield, holding on to the halter with all my might. 5

A jumble of thoughts ran through my head as I was bouncing along in pain behind Kit. What would Amy think of me if I couldn't do this simple job? What would David and Laura say after telling me already that I couldn't do it? What would happen if Kit got away? What would happen if I continued to hang on? 6

If I let go, Kit could run away, I thought, and then we might not be able to find him again. If I held on to him, would I ever be able to get him to stop without my being seriously injured? Stuck in this dilemma, I could do nothing but continue to hold on. The farther Kit took me, the more I was hurt. It was getting harder to breathe as the air was knocked out of me at every bump and bounce. Screaming at Kit to stop did no good. 7

As I was dragged on, I heard David and Laura shouting. They had been watching from the yard and took off running toward the hayfield when they saw me pulled to the ground. 8

"Let go, Hannah, let go!" Laura yelled at me. That thought sounded good, but the fear of Kit's escaping and being lost forever was vivid in my mind, so I held on tightly to the end of the halter. 9

"Hannah, let go!" Laura screamed again. At that moment I hit the edge of a ditch, which completely knocked the wind out of me, so let go I did! I lay there on the ground, scratched, bruised, and unable to breathe. With me no longer attached to him, Kit ran directly to his pen. David followed and put him away as Laura and my mother, who had seen the whole incident flash past her from the kitchen window, came to me while I was still lying on the ground. I wanted to cry, but I still didn't have any wind. 10

"Are you all right?" Laura asked as I gasped for breath. I couldn't answer her, but in a moment my mother had picked me up and was carrying me back to the house. Once I was able to breathe again, I started crying. I was in pain from my bruises and scratches, but having Laura and David trailing behind me with their "I told you so's" made me feel even worse. I had thought that I would be able to handle the job by myself, but I found out that I couldn't. 11

It has been years since "the Kit catastrophe," by which the event has come to be known in family lore, and I have taken much kidding from my older brothers and sisters. However, I learned that day that people can take on challenges that are too much for them. There is no shame in a person's admitting that he or she isn't prepared for some tasks—trying to run a marathon without training, leaping into college algebra without understanding basic arithmetic, promising to fix a best friend up with the "perfect" date. A little dose of reality can save a person from his or her own Kit catastrophe. 12

—Hannah Barnes

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Where in this introduction do you learn what the main conflict will be?
2. How does the author build suspense?
3. What is the climax of the story?
4. What is the author's final point (significance of the story)?
5. What is the author trying to accomplish by revealing her thoughts/emotions?
6. How well has the author used dialogue? What does she achieve with it?
7. How could the author add details to the setting to help readers better picture the farm?



For a detailed discussion of illustration, turn to Chapter 23.

Illustration (Using Examples)

Illustration means to give an **example** and then connect it to a point by explaining how the example fits. For instance, in the following student model essay, the author, Clare, tells us in her thesis that she was a fearful child. We ask, "Can you give us an example of your fears?" Clare responds by choosing several specific instances of childhood fears: a vacuum, a dog, and a monster. As she develops these examples with details and explanation, we begin to understand why she was a fearful child.

As you read the following essay, note on the lines below how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT ILLUSTRATION ELEMENTS

1. Topic sentences
2. Order of importance
3. Sentence connectors
4. Specific words, detailed examples, clear explanations

Fear in My Early Years

As an adult I like scary movies because they are not real danger. But I am very cowardly in real life. For example, I have never ridden a roller coaster because I'm afraid I might die on the ride, and I have never gone skiing with my friends because I don't want a broken arm or leg. From where, I wonder, do my fears come? I think that people like me are mostly afraid of physical harm, but if the fear is from an imaginary world, it can be fun. However, as a little girl real-world dangers and imaginary ones seemed to surround me. When I was young, it seemed that I was afraid of everything! 1

One of my earliest frightening memories is of the vacuum cleaner. When I was 4, I would run from my mother when I saw her getting the evil vacuum out of the closet. Sometimes I would hide in my closet or under my bed. By the time she was through cleaning, Mother would often be annoyed that I was hiding from the vacuum instead of doing some small chore, like putting my books in order or putting my crayons in their boxes. She would scold me for my laziness. Although I understand now that she was just trying to improve my work habits, I think her scolding made me fear the vacuum even more. 2

Another childhood fear was dogs. I had wanted a dog for as long as I could remember. My friend had a fluffy miniature poodle that did tricks like begging for food and rolling over. But my parents didn't want the mess and responsibility of owning a dog. However, one day while I was playing in my front yard, I saw a small white shaggy dog sniffing around in my neighbor's yard. I observed the dog for a while, and it looked friendly. Then it moved over to the edge of my yard. I wanted to touch that small, messy doggy, so I approached it slowly with my hand out, saying, "good doggy, nice doggy." But when my eyes and its met, it barked at me roughly and pursued me toward my front steps. It leaped up on my back, knocked me down, and ripped my shirt. My mother ran outside and chased the dog away, and it has taken me years to overcome my nervousness around dogs. 3

Worse than dogs for me, though, was my terror at the thought of Gang-xi, a Chinese vampire. In elementary school I had seen a popular kids' movie that featured Gang-xi as he sucked the blood and the life out of his victims. He discovered his prey by sensing human breathing and even the slightest movement. One autumn night I awoke in the early morning hours to see a lurid red light shining in my bedroom and a shadow on the shade over my window. I could hear the 4

clock tick-tocking loudly and thought I heard a scratching at the window. I was almost paralyzed with fright. I had just enough strength to creep down under the covers. Sweating and breathing as little as possible, I spent the night awake, without changing my position by an inch until the sun rose.

As I look back to these frights from my childhood, I think how ludicrous I was. But I think it 5
is as difficult to calm the fears of a child as it is to calm those of an adult. I see now not to be afraid of a vacuum, a little dog, or a monster movie. Yet I am still nervous thinking of the many dangers in the real world. However, I want to have lots of experiences as I grow. I want to travel more in the world. I know that if I am to do this, I will have to learn to separate my false fears, my "Gang-xi fears," from my real fears.

—Yunkyung Clare Bae

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development.
3. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
4. How are the body paragraphs organized (by space, time, or importance)? What phrase shows you this?
5. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture her fearful moments.
6. What one point can you add to make any main example more interesting?

Cause and Effect



For a detailed discussion of causes and effects, turn to Chapter 24.

Causes tell us what makes something happen; effects tell what results from that happening. For instance, "Why," we might ask," is the Arctic sea ice melting?" If we answer, "The cause is the rise in temperature," we are beginning to think critically or analytically. If we next ask, "But what is causing the temperature to rise?" we are beginning a chain of causes and effects that might look something like this: carbon dioxide and other gases cause global warming, which causes ice melting, which causes destruction of animal habitat, which causes animal decline, which causes loss of food source, which causes people to relocate, which causes . . . well, more problems. Determining causes and effects is an important step in preventing and solving problems.

As you read the following essay, note on the lines below how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT CAUSE/EFFECT ELEMENTS

1. Likely causes and effects
2. Thoroughly developed causes and effects
3. Real causes and effects
4. Critical thinking about causes and effects

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Driven to Drive in Midlife

When I was 36 years old, an accident changed my life forever. My son was 4 years old at the time, and I had been walking him to day care, but the day care had relocated, so I needed to begin taking him in a taxi. Unfortunately, one day we rode with a bad driver. When I got out and put my son on the ground, I looked for money in my purse to pay the driver. Suddenly, I heard my son scream because his fingers had been smashed between the taxi's doors. It made me both sad and angry. As I put my arms around him and walked him to the house, I whispered to myself, "This would not have happened if I had driven my own car." This bad experience made me resolve to learn to drive, and that decision has brought many happy consequences. 1

One benefit of being able to drive myself was that I could now do my own errands. Every day I took my son to day care. Next, I would pick up my mother, who was 75 years old and needed help running her errands. Sometimes we went to friends' or family members' houses and spent time together drinking tea or cool juices. I was glad that I had time to help my mother and time for myself to do my errands and see the people who were important to me. 2

Another good effect that came from my new skill with driving was that when we went out of town I was able to help my husband with the driving. I remember our first trip to northern Iran with our friends. My husband drove for about 4 hours on winding mountain roads with steep cliffs on both sides. When we stopped for juice and snacks, all of the women changed position with their husbands. I sat in the driver's seat, adjusted the rearview mirror, and fastened my seatbelt. When I started the car and began to drive down the mountain road, I was excited because this was the first time that I could see the road from the driver's position. I had to pay attention all the time. I felt proud and independent passing male drivers. One reason I was happy about learning to drive was that I could finally share the task of driving with my husband. 3

The most important result of my decision to learn to drive was that I conquered my fear of driving. When I used to sit in the front seat of my husband's car, I saw old women who drove confidently. I became jealous of them. I wanted to learn, but I was frightened and uncertain. I thought that I was too old to try, yet my husband encouraged me, telling me every day that he knew I could do it. Still, the traffic noise, the narrow streets, and the fatal accidents made me nervous. In the beginning I decided to drive only to places near our house, such as my son's day 4

care, but as I became more experienced, I began driving farther from home. After a few weeks of this, I realized that many of my fears about driving were foolish.

The sad event with my son has caused many positive effects in my life: I have become independent in my daily work, I help my husband, and I have overcome my fear of driving. Though sometimes I still walk to the market so that I can talk to people in the street, I feel good about myself that I can now drive. I am more productive and independent. I have also learned an important lesson in life from my decision to drive: people can learn anything, anytime, at any age if they just believe in themselves. 5

—Nahid Talebizadeh

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development.
3. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
4. How are the body paragraphs organized (by space, time, or importance)? What phrase shows you this?
5. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture the main effects discussed in each body paragraph.
6. What one point can you add to make any main effect more interesting?

Process Description



For a detailed discussion of process descriptions, turn to Chapter 25.

Process descriptions or explanations tell how something is done or how something works. You are familiar with many examples of processes **to do**: for instance, all instructions, like how to install a new computer or TV or how to program a cell phone. These instructions give readers practical information they need to complete some task.

Processes **to understand** are also valuable and abundant, satisfying people's curiosity about the world. Instead of instruction on how to install a computer, you might want to know how one works: how it processes, stores, retrieves, and shares information. Process descriptions are organized by time. They are broken into a series of steps that are explained, with unfamiliar terms defined and warnings given where needed.

As you read the following essay, note on the lines below how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT PROCESS ELEMENTS

1. All necessary steps
2. Step explanations: reasons and warnings
3. Definitions of terms
4. Interesting sentence patterns

Learn to Clean

From the start of the spring semester, I've been trying hard to balance my life as a full-time student at a community college, a husband, a father, and a cashier at a gas station. The station I work at is located on one of the busiest streets in Lawrence, Kansas. I started the job about 10 months ago and have been working the night shift 6 days a week ever since, from 6:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m., to support my family and pay for my education. Although it is hard work, I generally enjoy it since I get a chance to meet new people. The part I dislike is the cleaning. From the start of my shift until closing, I move from one cleaning job to another while also taking care of my customers. When new employees begin the job, it is my responsibility to teach them all the work procedures, including how to clean. 1

Wiping down counters and cases is the easiest duty. I usually start cleaning with the cashier's counter. The counter is wood with a few machines on it: the register, Lotto Check, credit card and phone card processors, gas machine, and a few glass showcases. I use a wet, clean cloth to wipe all this equipment to remove dust and smudges, and then I spray the glass surfaces with glass cleaner. From the counter I move to the glass doors of the freezers, bottle coolers, and main entrance door, spraying them, polishing, and leaving them streak free. It is important to use an alcohol-based cleaner rather than just water to eliminate streaks from the glass. 2

My next task (the one I hate the most) is emptying the trash cans and vacuuming the carpets. There are seven trash bins inside the store and four outside. Each night I have to empty the trash cans piled up with garbage and prepare the new ones. I hate the disgusting smell of the trash collected throughout the day, but I dispose of it anyway in the dumpster next to the store, always wearing gloves when I do. When arranging the new bags, it is important to slip the tops over the rim of the cans and fix the lid so that the bags won't slip down when the cans fill up. Then I take the carpets, including the heavy front mat, one by one to the storeroom, where I vacuum them clean. 3

Cleaning and washing the coffee and cappuccino machines is the next duty, and I have learned to perform this one cautiously. I press the Hold and Rinse button to clean the machines. When the rinse cycle is over, I collect the wastewater and remove it from the machines. However, I am careful now because the water is scalding, and the edges of the container are sharp. I have burned and cut myself several times while trying to clean the machines too quickly. 4

The last part of the cleaning process is sweeping and mopping the store. I begin by sweeping the counter area, moving small shelves to clean underneath. Next, I move to the restrooms and the storeroom. With the sweeping out of the way, I mop, using a yellow bucket on wheels, which I fill with hot water from a restroom and then add pine-oil soap. This part of the cleanup process can be dangerous because the floors are slippery. It is best to move cautiously and to place "Wet Floor" signs where customers can see them. Finally, I lightly mop the carpets to remove dust patches and then dispose of the dirty water to end my cleaning duties for the day. 5

If this description of store cleanup makes it seem like tedious, hard work, I think it is, too. Before coming to the United States to be with my family, I was employed as a banking executive in Sri Lanka. What I do today is a far cry from what I used to do back home. Sometimes when I get frustrated with my job, I regret coming here. But then I remind myself that I am here with the two people who matter most to me and that I have the chance to study again. I know that my work/study life will not continue endlessly. There is an end in sight. And I am willing to go through the hardships so that my family and I will have a better future. 6

—Nalin Weerasekara

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development (including reasons for steps and warnings).
3. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
4. How are the body paragraphs organized (by space, time, or importance)? What words help you see this method of organization?
5. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture the main steps discussed in each body paragraph.
6. What one point can you add to make any main step clearer or more interesting?

Comparison/Contrast



For more discussion of comparison and contrast, turn to Chapter 26.

To compare is to bring like topics together to explore their similarities while to contrast is to highlight their differences. These acts are fundamental to how people communicate, helping someone learn about the unknown through what is known. If you want to quickly give a friend who has never been to Costco an idea of what it looks like, you might compare it to a place where your friend shops, like Target. You might also contrast Costco with a mall store like Dillard's. Showing what something *isn't* can also help people understand what it *is*.

When writers compare or contrast, they include significant points and discuss the *same* points for each topic. Comparisons and contrasts are arranged by the **block** method (all points about one topic are mentioned, then all points about the next topic are discussed) or the **point-by-point** method (points about topics are paired in each body paragraph).

As you read the following essay, note on the lines below how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT COMPARISON/CONTRAST ELEMENTS

1. Meaningful comparison or contrast
2. Interesting comparison or contrast
3. Well-developed comparison or contrast
4. Well-connected comparison or contrast

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Under Attack

Her fur against my hand feels like a long, stringy shag carpet. Her hair smells like the 1
outdoors as her tail wags and slaps against my nose. On the other hand, his fur feels like a fluffy Teddy bear beneath my fingers. As I rub his back, I can tell by the look in his eyes that he is ungratefully about to sink his teeth into my hand. As I sit and pet my Australian terrier, Luna, and my Siamese, Seymour, I can tell how different their personalities are; but I prefer my dog's much more gentle yet lively behavior.

If you enjoy pets, then there are several reasons a dog is the best pet to own. One reason 2
is because dogs, if trained, will play fetch, regardless of what object is being thrown. My dog, Luna, will go to just about any length to get her beat-up old toy. I can throw the little red monster chew toy, the one with no eyes or squeaker and mostly missing its stuffing, and she is always excited to chase it. Another reason dogs are great is because when they have to be bathed, it can be done without tasering them into unconsciousness. Although Luna doesn't like baths, with a little coaxing in she goes. As I begin to pour water on her, she seems to shrink, getting scrawnier by the second as her fur slicks down. Then it's time for the suds. After lathering her up enough to look like Mr. Bubbles, I see that Luna has to shake, throwing bubbles all over me, not to mention the bathroom. Then comes the rinse. Oh, no, now she has to shake at least ten more times! One of the best reasons for having a dog as a pet is that it soon learns to pee and poop outside. Luna lets me know exactly when she needs to be let out. Out she goes and does her business (sometimes even in the mean neighbor's yard), and then she comes right back in. There she waits for me to sit down so she can cuddle right next to me.

On the other hand, there is my cat, Seymour. He won't fetch, although we do have a toy 3
fishing pole with a pink glittery fish on the end that he enjoys trying to catch—when he is in the mood. However, sometimes I think it's really my hand or arm that he's after, willing to sink his claws or teeth into any part of me—when he's feeling playful. As far as giving him a bath, well, I might as well give up. I know that cats are cleaner than dogs, but sometimes they still need a bath. Getting him into the tub isn't hard (which says something about his memory), but as soon as the water starts running, watch out! It's up the side of the bathtub and over my head he goes. Locked in the bathroom, he can't escape me, and after an all-out war, I finally get him washed and dried. When I am done, I look like I have tumbled off my bike at 30 miles an hour, my clothes torn and my body

scratched from head to toe. But the worst problem of living with a cat is the stinky litter box. No matter how often I change the litter, the box stinks. Worse, like many cats, Seymour has to kick the little pebbles all over the floor every time he goes. Stepping on those little rocks in my bare feet feels like I'm being stabbed by shards of glass! I might feel better about the litter landmines if Seymour comforted me when I was hopping around "ow-ing" on one foot, but this cat only cuddles when he wants to.

Owning both a cat and a dog brings its share of problems into my life. Seymour can 4
sometimes be just awful, and I can never tell what his next move is going to be unless it involves his breaking another lamp or vase. Worse, Seymour often seems indifferent to me, especially at those times when I'm feeling down. However, Luna is always close by at those times my life isn't going right. She seems to sense when I need some emotional support, and there comes that shaggy face into my lap. And nothing beats hearing her excited barking or seeing her wag her whole body to greet me when I come home. I have grown to love Seymour in spite of his many faults, but if I had the choice again, I would not get a cat.

—Erin Stanley

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development (including reasons for steps and warnings).
3. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
4. How are the main examples arranged within the two body paragraphs (by time or importance)? What words help you see this method of organization?
5. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture the main steps discussed in each body paragraph.
6. What one point can you add to make any point of contrast clearer or more interesting?



For a detailed discussion of classification, turn to Chapter 27.

Classification

Classifying is more a pattern of organization than of development. It allows us to separate objects, people, and ideas into groups so that we can learn more about them and locate the information when we want to return to it. Businesses such as supermarkets, clothing stores, toy stores, and hardware stores group items to help customers find what they are looking for. People are often grouped according to age, gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, economic standing, job, and many others categories. Ideas and bodies of knowledge are grouped in many ways, for example, the various disciplines and courses at your college.

When writers classify, they should be careful to select a **single organizing principle (SOP)** with which to divide their topic. Notice that the author of the following student model used patterns of organization as her SOP to group knowledge about reading.

As you read the following essay, note on the lines below how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT CLASSIFICATION ELEMENTS

1. Single organizing principle
2. Effective organizing principle
3. Well-developed topics
4. Complete groups

Making the Most of Reading

Once people learn to read, they always know how, so why would they need to know more about the subject? The answer to this question is that just being able to read does not make people skillful readers, especially when they are faced with more difficult types of reading like they find in college. Also, if you, like me, are reading in a new language, learning reading techniques can make the process easier. By recognizing some common patterns, such as time order, comparison-contrast, cause-and-effect, and listing, readers will be able to understand and remember even complicated information. 1

One common pattern in reading is time, or chronological, order. This pattern is used in telling stories but is also often used in giving instructions and in understanding how processes work. Clue words to help recognize this pattern are words like *then, when, next, after, since, later, awhile, earlier, eventually,* and *finally*. Dates and times also show time order. For example, reading, "On September 14 we were gathered in the living room when . . ." or "By 3 o'clock we knew that something was wrong" is a good sign that you are reading a time order pattern. 2

Another easily recognized pattern of organization in reading is comparing and contrasting. When ideas are compared, the similarities are shown, and when ideas are contrasted, the differences are shown. Sometimes only a comparison or a contrast is made, but there may be both. For instance, a class in government might compare George W. Bush's presidency to that of his father's by looking at the Middle East wars they were involved in, or a contrast could be made with the first President Bush's only serving one term versus the second Bush's serving two terms. Clue words to comparing are *likewise, similarly, also, in the same way,* and *resembling*. Clue words for contrasting are words like *however, even though, on the other hand, yet,* and *in contrast.* 3

In addition to comparison and contrast as an organizational pattern is cause and effect. This pattern tells about what makes things happen. For instance, you might read about Chinese babies being adopted by many Westerners and find explanations for why this is occurring. This would be what is causing the adoptions. On the other hand, the article might instead tell about what happens to the adopted children or how the adoptions affect people in China. This would show the effects of the adoptions. Some clue word to signal causes and effects are *as a result, since, thus, so, consequently,* and *accordingly.* 4

Simple listing may be the most common pattern of organization in reading. This pattern is usually used when the author wants to explain a series of reasons or examples or to give supporting details. Sometimes the list has numbers or bullets, and sometimes not. For example, a college pre-algebra class might list knowing basic skills like addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, negative numbers, and simple formulas as necessary knowledge before a student can pass on to college algebra. The simple series helps a reader focus on the information and remember the ideas. Some signal words for listing are *and, also, in addition, further, next,* and *last.* 5

The patterns I have listed are just some of the common ones that help people become better readers. Still, you may ask, why bother with learning this knowledge? I will tell you that before I took my reading class, I was struggling in much of my English reading. Even magazines and the newspaper seemed hard for me to understand. Additionally, my college textbooks were very difficult. However, now that I have finished the course and learned the patterns, I read more easily and remember more of what I read. Learning a little bit can help a lot. 6

—Esther Cho

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development (including specific examples).
3. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
4. How are the body paragraphs organized (by time or importance)? What words help you see this method of organization?
5. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture the main examples discussed in each body paragraph.
6. What one point can you add to make any main example clearer or more interesting?

Definition Essays



For a detailed discussion of definition, turn to Chapter 28.

To define means to separate one word from another and to explain its essential nature, what makes the word what it is. For example, when we define a word like *college*, we must include points like "an institution for education following K–12." There is much more that we can say about colleges, but we must at least include certain defining points. People define in many ways, including the typical dictionary definition, metaphorical comparison, and **negation** (telling what something isn't and then saying what it really is). More importantly, to develop thorough and interesting definitions, writers rely on all the patterns of development explained in Unit Four.

As you read the following essay, note on separate paper or below the essay on page 487 how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT DEFINITION ELEMENTS

1. Brief definitions
   a. Negation
   b. Comparisons (metaphors and similes)
   c. Formal (grouping and detailing)
2. Extended definitions
   a. Description
   b. Narration
   c. Illustration
   d. Comparison/contrast
   e. Process description
   f. Cause/effect
   g. Classification

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Arowana

Although arowana might sound like marijuana, it is actually a fish. Walking into Jumbo Fish 1
Store, I came upon an arowana. Its scales reflected the sunlight to my eyes as if the fish were made of chrome-plated metal. This elegant 2-foot animal moved so gracefully that I felt I must have it in my aquarium. Drooling and wondering what the price was, I looked for an employee. "How much for this arowana?" I asked the clerk. "Eleven hundred dollars," he replied, as if that price was nothing. I thought he must be crazy. Who would pay that much for a fish? With a frown I left the store, determined to find out more about this beautiful animal and why people were willing to pay a small fortune for it.

First I learned a little history of the arowana. They are a primitive freshwater fish whose 2
ancestors were alive over 150 million years ago; arowana are now found in South America, Australia, and Asia. The people of South America have traditionally harvested the fish for food (although it is called a "bony" fish), but worldwide the populations of arowana are declining due to destruction of habitat, so they are not eaten as much these days. Instead, they are being raised mostly in Australia and Asia for the aquarium hobbyist market. However, Asia is where the fish is in the highest demand, as I found out, bringing thousands of dollars for the larger and more exotic species. Arowana can be several colors: golden ones are native to Malaysia, golden with red tail and full-red arowanas are found in Indonesia, and green ones swim in rivers in Southeast Asia. These fish can grow to be 3 feet long and can live for 50 years.

Another reason for the arowana's popularity is that it resembles the Asians' mystical 3
dragon (the Asian, not the Western European, dragon, which is usually not shown with whiskers and is thicker, like a meat-eating dinosaur with wings). Both the fish and the dragon have colorful scales, and they both have whiskers. Also, the arowana has long, broad pectoral fins (the fins attached to the fish's ribcage, along its sides) that remind many people of a dragon's wings. Dragons in flight are often pictured as snaking through the air, again resembling the graceful swimming movement of the arowana. In Asian culture the dragon represents good luck, strength, and power. Especially in the southern region of China, people believe that a dragon can ward off evil, and they are attracted to the arowana, calling it the "dragon fish." Many business people keep these fish in their buildings to contribute to successful operations. Arowanas are common in restaurants, as well, not to be eaten but to ensure a prosperous business. Some think that the

arowana can even ward off approaching death or give its own life in place of its owner's when death comes for him or her.

However, to me, what makes the arowana the most special of fish is its aggressive attitude. 4
I like watching it swim through the water with confidence, not fearing any other fish in its aquarium world. It is at the top of the food chain, a predator seeking prey. In the wild, arowanas feed close to the surface, capturing other fish, snakes, frogs, insects large and small—anything the arowana can get its toothy mouth around. In aquariums arowana are also kings. A goldfish is nosing about for food, minding its own business, when suddenly, out of nowhere, wham! The goldfish is gone, and the arowana is spitting out a few scales.

Arowanas are thought of by some as simply a "freshwater bony fish of the family 5
Osteoglossidae," but to me this fish represents Asian culture and the power of a major predator. The arowana is no humble goldfish, stupidly drifting about or hiding in fear under a rock. I admire the arowana's way of life and would rather be like it than the goldfish. Thinking these thoughts, I arrive back at Jumbo Fish Store, having decided to purchase an arowana, not the 2-foot one but a baby only 3 inches long but still costing $200. I'm crazy for buying an arowana, but this fish reminds me of how I see myself. And when it gets big enough, maybe I'll sell it to some other crazy fish fan—for $1,100, or more.

—Phonepraseut Mounivong

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development (including specific examples). What is the defining or most special element of the arowana to the author? What essential, defining qualities have you learned about the arowana?
3. Name and discuss how effectively the author uses several brief and several extended definitions (patterns of development).
4. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
5. How are the body paragraphs organized (by time or importance)? What words help you see this method of organization?
6. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture the main examples discussed in each body paragraph.
7. What one point can you add to make any main example clearer or more interesting?

Persuasion



For a detailed discussion of persuasion, turn to Chapter 29.

Persuasive writing seeks to move people to believe or act in a certain way. Whenever we want something from others, we practice our persuasive skills. A teenager wants to go to the lake with friends for the weekend, saying to his parents, "Oh, come on, you know you can trust me." An adult negotiates with her boss for an extra day off, saying, "I've worked overtime and weekends for the company for the past three months."

To be effective persuaders, we must think closely about whom we are trying to move and what might persuade them. Writers of effective arguments consider their **audience** carefully, present and support **reasons** for their beliefs, anticipate and overcome **objections** and opposing reasons to their position, appeal to **emotions** and **ethics** as well as **logic**, and, finally, carefully **qualify** (limit) their claims.

As you read the following essay, which is intended to appeal particularly to teens and young adults, note on separate paper how the writer uses each of these elements:

IMPORTANT PERSUASION ELEMENTS

1. Defining the issue
2. Giving reasons and support
3. Connecting with the audience
4. Countering opposing reasons and objections

He Was My Friend

Sam was a senior in high school, captain of the football team, homecoming king, and the senior class president. He was also my friend. He did not wear the most expensive clothes, drive the fastest car, or make the best grades, but he was liked by everyone. He was the guy who invited the new kids in school to sit with him at lunch, and the one who was always willing to help the freshmen find their classes. He loved a good party and could drink a beer faster than anyone I had ever seen. Sam was nice, he was funny, he was popular, and he was my friend. Yet in 2005, he was killed in a car accident because he chose to drink and drive. 1

Many young people believe that they are invincible, and I was no exception. I would go to a party, drink a few beers, and then drive home. Drinking and driving was a common practice among most of the high school students in my town. We didn't believe that drinking and driving was a problem. However, Sam's death proved us all wrong. 2

Drinking and driving is a serious problem in the United States. Sam was just one of the 16,189 Americans killed in accidents involving alcohol last year. Another 1,058,990 were injured in alcohol-related accidents during that same year. This problem affects everyone. About three in every five Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related accident at some point in their lives, or if they aren't directly involved, they will know someone who is. Drinking and driving affects so many, so why do people do it? 3

The answer to this question is simply that they can. Nothing is preventing people from driving drunk. It's easy for someone who has been drinking to start a car and drive off. However, action should be taken to stop this. The ultimate solution to the drinking and driving problem does just that. 4

This solution lies with car manufacturers and perhaps the government. These days, cars are commonly equipped with features like heated and vibrating seats, GPS map displays, even voice-activated controls. So designing a car with a breathalyzer attached to the starting mechanism should be within our ability. In fact, for the past several years, car breathalyzers have been used in California with repeat DUI offenders. This approach has dramatically reduced drunken driving arrests. The device is simple and inexpensive, requiring only that a person breathe into a tube before trying to start a car. Too much alcohol in the person's bloodstream and the car won't start. 5

This is the ultimate solution because it does not give a person who is intoxicated the chance to drive, and it is cost effective. While the initial investment is modest, the government or 6

auto insurance companies could provide auto manufacturers some financial incentives. Regardless of the start-up cost, the net economic impact would be far less than the $45 billion America spends yearly on alcohol-related accidents. Car makers have the technology and can afford to equip cars with breathalyzers, so why don't they?

Some argue that people will be able to deactivate the breathalyzer or fool it in some other way. There is merit in these objections because people are ingenious and constantly find ways around laws and safeguards (think of computer hackers and spammers, for example). However, linked to a new car's computer system, the device would not be easy to fool, and laws could be enacted that require car service centers to report any tampering with the device. People resisted catalytic converters and seatbelts for a while, but now they have become a way of life for most people. Others who object to car breathalyzers say that a drunk can simply have a sober friend breathe into the device, and off the drunk goes. This might happen occasionally, but I think most sober people would refuse an intoxicated person's request, and if they are drinking together, neither will be able to start the car. 7

America needs breathalyzers in cars because other solutions to the problem are not working. How about anti-drinking commercials? I've been in rooms full of teenagers who simply laugh at these. Law enforcement has tried lowering the legal limit for blood alcohol in drivers and raising fines for convictions, but neither has had much impact on the DUI problem. Raising the cost of insurance or canceling it isn't working either; not even revoking drivers' licenses seems to have much effect. 8

Keeping intoxicated people out from behind the wheel of a car is the best solution to drunk driving. If Sam had not been able to start his car, he might still be alive. I have already lost one friend to drinking and driving. It made me realize that no one is invincible. Drinking and driving affects everyone. Until breathalyzers are mandatory equipment in cars, I ask that you please don't drink and drive. Sam was killed because he chose to drink and drive. He was only 18, he was just a senior in high school, and he was my friend. 9

—Katie Sturgeon

THINKING ABOUT THE STUDENT MODEL

1. Evaluate the introduction. Comment on the hook, support sentences, and thesis.
2. Evaluate the body paragraphs. Comment on the topic sentences (including connecting words) and development (including specific examples).
3. How well does the author present and support her reasons? Comment on her use of evidence and emotional appeals.
4. What objections to her solution does the author acknowledge? How well does she refute them? What objections has she missed?
5. Evaluate the conclusion. Comment on the lead sentence, summary, and expanded thought.
6. Discuss how three of the writer's specific words help you picture the main examples discussed in each body paragraph.
7. What one point can you add to make any main example clearer or more persuasive?

ACTIVITY 31.1 WORKING ONLINE: *Trying Out Different Essay Patterns*

Choose a model essay in this chapter and rewrite it in a different pattern; the purpose of the essay will likely change. Here are some ideas:

1. **Write a process description of how to care for an arowana**. Learn more at http://www.arowanacare.com/ or http://www.arowanaclub.com/.
2. **Classify either categories of drunk drivers or the types of penalties they face.** Learn more at http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/drive/a/aa082797.htm or http://www.drunkdrivingpenalties.org/ or http://drunkdrivinglaws.org/.



AN ESSAY ASSIGNMENT



Focusing primarily on one writing pattern, write an essay about a conservation topic. Turn to page 317, 330, 345, 349, 363, 373, 388, 405, 421, or 437 for specific "green" paragraph assignments, and adapt your assignment of choice for the essay. (See Chapter 30 for advice about turning paragraphs into essays.) Consult the appropriate "Important Elements" box to make sure that you, like the model student writers in this chapter, take advantage of key strategies for your writing pattern. ●

ACTIVITY 31.2 WORKING TOGETHER: *Analyzing Your Essay's Effectiveness*

Show a partner a draft of an essay you are currently working on—for this or another class; in turn, look over a draft for him or her. Apply (adapting where necessary) the appropriate "Thinking About the Student Model" questions to both of your essays, and discuss your responses. Which pattern(s) of development did you each use, and how effectively? List three changes each of you could make to improve your essay.



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Polishing Style

6

32 Varying Sentences 493

33 Choosing Effective Words 503

BRANNAN

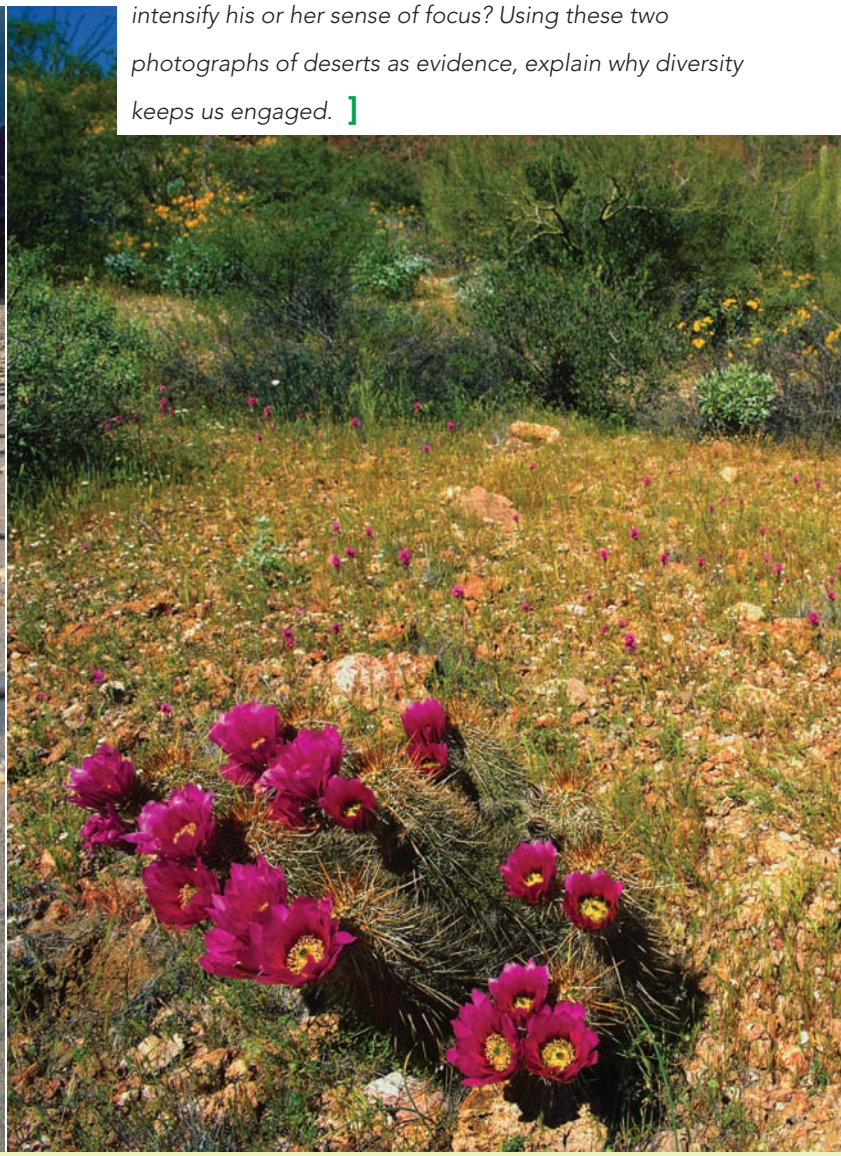


Varying Sentences

32

[*How does variety help attract a reader's interest and intensify his or her sense of focus? Using these two photographs of deserts as evidence, explain why diversity keeps us engaged.*]





KEY TOPICS

- Varying the length of sentences
- Varying the types of sentences
- Varying the beginnings of sentences

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

Being able to produce well-focused, clearly written, and fully developed paragraphs is a major accomplishment, but we can go one step further. Our ideas can seem more or less interesting depending on how we present them at the sentence level: our choice of words (Chapter 33), and the manner in which we arrange them, can have an enormous impact on the way readers receive our ideas. This chapter will help you overcome monotonous sentence patterns and emphasize key points.



Avoid using more than three or four sentences of the same length in a row.

Varying the Length of Sentences

Sentences that are too similar in length make monotonous paragraphs. The sentences may be short, medium, or long, but too many of approximately the same length in a row can be tedious. What is your reaction to the following paragraph?

DRAFT

> The winter scenery in Colorado is breathtaking. The mountains frame the skyline with snow-covered, glistening peaks. There are also plunging valleys. There are endless waves of mountain ridges in all directions. The mountains offer a new world to explore. Skiers ride only a few minutes on a lift. Then they reach the summit of the mountain. Here they have a 360-degree view of this magnificent mountain world. Skiers glide to a stop at the top of the ridge. The sun is overhead in a brilliant blue sky. The sun shines down and sparkles off the snow. The sparkles look like thousands of glittering diamonds. Dark-green pines are in rows in the distance. The branches of the pines sag under the previous night's snowfall. Skiers are dressed in multicolored clothing of blue, red, yellow, and white. The skiers chatter back and forth as they ski. They glide up to the edge of a ridge. They scream in delight as they plunge down the steep chutes. They are earthbound no more!

If this draft feels choppy, one reason is that too many of its 19 sentences are roughly the same length: around 8 to 11 words. Notice how the following revised paragraph offers more variety in sentence length:

REVISION

> The winter scenery in Colorado is breathtaking. The mountains frame the skyline with snow-covered, glistening peaks and plunging valleys. Endless waves of mountain ridges in all directions offer a whole new world to explore. After only a few minutes riding on a lift, a skier can reach the summit for a 360-degree view of this magnificent mountain world. At the top of the ridge, skiers glide to a stop, the sun shining overhead in a brilliant blue sky, sparkling off the snow like thousands of glittering diamonds. Rows of dark-green pines march into the distance, their branches sagging under the previous night's snowfall. Skiers dressed in multicolored clothing—bright blues, reds, yellows, pinks, and white—chatter back and forth as they glide to the edge of a ridge, then scream in delight as they plunge down the steep chutes, earthbound no more!

The revised version contains only 7 sentences, and they range from 7 to 40 words. The point in creating variety in sentence length is not to avoid short sentences or to write only long ones, but rather to create a diverse and interesting mix. It is easy to divide or combine sentences to suit your needs.

ACTIVITY 32.1 *Combining Sentences for Variety in Length*

Increase the readability of the following paragraph by combining some of its sentences. Aim for a mix of sentence lengths, but don't eliminate all the shorter ones. A short sentence, especially following several longer ones, can be emphatic.

Our family Christmas has morphed into something unusual—skiing on Christmas day! We used to enjoy Christmas at home just fine. The family would gather around the old fir tree. We would decorate it with glowing lights and ornaments. We would also use tinsel and popcorn strings. We would listen to Christmas music, even sing a few songs. We would think about all the sleigh bells "jing-, jing-, jinglin'." We would also think about the "white and drifted snow—ohhhh." Then one Christmas my dad started talking about skiing. He said, "Wouldn't it be great if. . . ." Well, one thing led to another. Now we have a new family tradition. You might wonder why a Christmas ski trip is so special. Well, here are three good reasons: nearly empty slopes, cheap prices, and fantastic views.



You may need to drop or add words as you combine sentences for Activity 32.1. For more help with sentence combining, read ahead in this chapter.

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Varying the Types of Sentences

Another way to create sentence variety is by using different **types** of sentences, as we practiced in Chapter 11. Here is a reminder of the four sentence types.

1. **Simple** (one main clause): A snowstorm is moving in.
2. **Compound** (coordination through two main clauses): A snowstorm is moving in, and it may drop a foot of snow.
3. **Complex** (one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses): A snowstorm that may drop a foot of snow is moving in.
4. **Compound-complex** (two or more main clauses and one or more subordinate clauses): A snowstorm that may drop a foot of snow is moving in, so I will have my shovel ready.

As writers use the four sentence types, they coordinate and subordinate. To **coordinate** means to link equal parts of sentences, usually with a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, so, yet, for, nor*), as in example 2 above. **Subordination** de-emphasizes one part of a sentence, as in examples 3 and 4. Both coordination and subordination help us create sentence variety and express our thoughts in more subtle ways.



Coordinate clauses are equal; subordinate clauses are unequal. See Chapter 12 to review coordination and subordination.

ACTIVITY 32.2 *Combining Sentences by Compounding*

Combine the following sets of simple sentences into compound sentences separated by a comma followed by *and* or *but*.

EXAMPLE: Simple sentence: The Cadillac Escalade has a powerful V-8 engine.
Simple sentence: The Cadillac Escalade only gets 7 mpg when hauling a heavy load.

Compound sentence: The Cadillac Escalade has a powerful V-8 engine, but the Escalade gets only 7 mpg when hauling a heavy load. (Note comma before but.)

1. Simple sentence: Dave has great Christmas parties.

   Simple sentence: Keith's may be better.

   Compound sentence: _____

   _____

2. Simple sentence: Acrobatic leaps characterize the humpback whale.

   Simple sentence: Haunting songs characterize the humpback whale.

   Compound sentence: _____

   _____

3. Simple sentence: Hummingbirds can hover in one place.

   Simple sentence: Hummingbirds can fly backward.

   Compound sentence: _____

   _____

4. Simple sentence: Mike learned that the journey is more important than the destination.

   Simple sentence: Borge learned that if the destination is important, the journey needs focus.

   Compound sentence: _____

   _____

   _____

5. Simple sentence: Vickie and Kurt were determined to vote in the primaries.

   Simple sentence: They planned to leave work early to do it.

   Compound sentence: _____

   _____

6. Write three compound sentences of your own. (Remember to use commas correctly.)

   a. _____

   _____

   b. _____

   _____

   c. _____

   _____



Common relative pronouns include *who*, *which*, and *that*. For more on nonessential clauses, see Chapters 11 and 12.

Subordinating Words in Sentences

Aside from coordination, you can also achieve sentence variety through **subordination:** that is, making one part of a sentence less important than another. Subordination helps writers deal with shades of meaning and complex ideas and often involves setting information off with commas, parentheses, and dashes.

We will focus here on the **complex** sentence (a simple sentence plus one or more subordinate clauses), along with **adjective** and **adverb clauses.**

Adjective Clauses—Nonessential

Adjective clauses can usually be identified by the relative pronouns *who, which,* and *that*. Such clauses provide information about the noun or pronoun they follow.

1. Emma, *who* is also a fine soccer player, is a talented musician.
2. However, Emma's first love is sports, *which* keep her busy most of the time.

The sentences above use nonessential adjective clauses. The "who" clause in sentence 1 adds additional—not essential—information about Emma's soccer ability, but the focus of the sentence is on her musical ability. Sentence 2 uses the "which" clause to add an end comment, but the focus is on the information in the main clause, Emma's love of sports. Note that *commas* are used to set off nonessential clauses.

To avoid ambiguity with "which" clauses, it is usually best to position them next to a single noun or pronoun rather than expecting them to describe several words or ideas.

Not this: Emma's first love is soccer, although she is not the best player on her team, *which keeps her busy*. (Is it soccer that keeps Emma busy or the fact that she is not the best player?)

But this: Although she is not the best player on her team, Emma's first love is soccer, which keeps her busy. (It *is* soccer that keeps Emma busy.)



Note that some cultures value writing that is forceful, while others prefers a more subtle approach.

Adjective Clauses—Essential

As we have seen, adjective clauses can be nonessential to the meaning of the main part of a sentence. We set off these nonessential clauses with commas. However, adjective clauses can also be **essential:** if we left the clause out, the meaning in the main part of the sentence would be unclear or distorted. Compare the following two sentences:

1. Senator Obama, *who* campaigned on a promise of hope and a new direction for the country, ran for president in 2008.
2. A politician *who* campaigned on a promise of hope and a new direction for the country ran for president in 2008.



For more on essential clauses, see Chapters 11 and 12.

In sentence 1, naming Senator Obama clears up any doubt about who ran for president; therefore, the relative clause beginning "who campaigned on . . ." is nonessential and is set off with commas. However, in the second sentence we do not know which politician the writer is referring to until we read the adjective clause beginning "who campaigned on. . . ."

Distinguishing between nonessential and essential clauses can sometimes be difficult and often depends on the author's intent. In general, the pronoun *that* introduces essential clauses (though *which* is sometimes used). Clauses beginning with *who* usually refer to people.



Use *who* to refer to people and *which* and *that* to refer to animals or things. Use a comma to set off nonessential subordinate clauses but not essential ones.

ACTIVITY 32.3 *Combining Sentences with Adjective Clauses*

Combine the following sets of sentences by crossing out the unneeded noun or pronoun in the second sentence and replacing it with *who*, *which*, or *that*.

EXAMPLE: Joni Mitchell has been making music for more than 40 years. ~~She~~ wrote the classic hit "The Circle Game." Combined: *Joni Mitchell, who wrote the classic hit "The Circle Game," has been making music for more than 40 years.*

1. Al Gore has recently won a Nobel Prize for his work with global warming.

   Gore won the popular vote in the 2000 presidential election.

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Combined: _____

_____

2. Genocide still continues in Darfur.

   Darfur is a region in the sub-Saharan African nation of Sudan.

   Combined: _____

   _____

3. Although most city water is safe to drink, people in the United States continue to buy water in plastic bottles.

   The bottles often end up in landfills—as many as 60 million bottles daily.

   Combined: _____

   _____

   _____

4. Lonnie Rashid Lynn is a popular rap artist.

   Lynn starred with Denzel Washington in *American Gangster*.

   Combined: _____

   _____

5. Adam Bahner, a student at the University of Minnesota, created a YouTube hit.

   The YouTube hit has been viewed by 4.5 million people.

   Combined: _____

   _____

6. Write three sentences of your own that contain either an essential or a nonessential adjective clause. Use commas carefully.

   a. _____

   _____

   b. _____

   _____

   c. _____

   _____

Adverb Clauses

Another form of complex sentence you can use for sentence variety combines an adverb clause with a main clause. **Adverb clauses**, like single adverbs, tell *when, where, why, how,* and *to what extent* something was done. They frequently begin with **subordinating conjunctions** like the following:

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS (FOR A MORE COMPLETE LIST, SEE P. 176.)

after	before	so that	whenever
although	if	unless	where
as	once	until	whereas
because	since	when	while

COMMA **Because** he forgot to put the trash out for pickup, Paul was stuck carting three bags to a dumpster.

NO COMMA **Paul** was stuck carting three bags to a dumpster **because** he forgot to put the trash out for pickup.

We ask the question "Why did Paul have to take his trash to a dumpster?" and answer it with the adverb clause "because he forgot to put the trash out for pickup." Like adjective clauses, adverb clauses are **subordinate**, or dependent on a main clause to complete their meaning. Standing alone, they are fragments, but combined with main clauses, they can add variety to your sentences.

Notice that adverb clauses, like single adverbs and adverb phrases, are flexible sentence parts; usually, they can be repositioned in a sentence to suit the writer's meaning and word flow. When adverb clauses begin a sentence (like this one), set them off with a comma. Remember that adverb clauses generally are *not* set off by commas when they come after the main clause unless they follow the conjunctions *although, even though,* and *though*.



Adverb clauses are generally easy to move around. See Chapters 11 and 12.

ACTIVITY 32.4 *Combining Sentences with Adverb Clauses*

Combine the following sets of sentences by adding a subordinating conjunction from the list on the preceding page to the beginning of the *second* sentence in each pair. Write two versions of the combined sentence: the first with the adverb clause beginning the sentence and the second with the adverb clause ending the sentence.

EXAMPLE: We were astonished by how graceful and fearless green sea turtles are. We first snorkled with them in the ocean.

Adverb clause beginning sentence: *When we first snorkled with them in the ocean, we were astonished by how graceful and fearless green sea turtles are.* (comma needed)

Adverb clause ending sentence: *We were astonished by how graceful and fearless green sea turtles are when we first snorkled with them in the ocean.* (no comma needed)

1. I feel better now. My fever has finally broken.

   Adverb clause beginning sentence: _____

   _____

   Adverb clause ending sentence: _____

   _____

2. The worst that can happen is that she will say no. You invite Leslie to the dance.

   Adverb clause beginning sentence: _____

   _____

   Adverb clause ending sentence: _____

   _____

3. New Jersey abolished the death penalty. Its legislators finished debating the issue.

   Adverb clause beginning sentence: _____

   _____



Observe the comma rules described in the preceding paragraph.

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Adverb clause ending sentence: _____

_____

4. Hundreds of turtles will continue to be killed annually. Anglers abandon their long-line fishing gear.

   Adverb clause beginning sentence: _____

   _____

   Adverb clause ending sentence: _____

   _____

5. Butter, eggs, and nuts are actually healthy choices. People eat too much of them.

   Adverb clause beginning sentence: _____

   _____

   Adverb clause ending sentence: _____

   _____

6. Write three sentences of your own that contain an adverb clause.

   a. _____

   _____

   b. _____

   _____

   c. _____

   _____

Varying the Beginnings of Sentences

Beyond working with sentences of differing lengths and types, we can also create variety by using different **sentence beginnings**. In English we often open sentences with a subject, but if we build a pattern of sentences that all begin with subjects, the writing feels monotonous. Let's look back at the paragraph we used in Activity 32.1.

> **DRAFT:** The mountains offer a new world to explore. Skiers ride only a few minutes on a lift. Then they reach the summit of the mountain. Here they have a 360-degree view of this magnificent mountain world. Skiers glide to a stop at the top of the ridge. The sun is overhead in a brilliant blue sky. The sun shines down and sparkles off the snow.

In the draft, aside from similar sentence length, all seven sentences begin with subjects. After combining a few sentences and supplying several different openings, the revised paragraph reads like this:

> **REVISION:** The mountains offer a new world to explore. After only a few minutes riding on a lift, a skier can reach the summit for a 360-degree view of this magnificent mountain world. At the top of the ridge, skiers glide to a stop, the sun shining overhead in a brilliant blue sky, sparkling off the snow like thousands of glittering diamonds.

As a rule, it is best to interrupt the subject-first pattern after three or four sentences in a row. You can do this with single words (such as *however, first, next,*

additionally, or *finally*), but you may find phrases and clauses even more helpful in varying your sentence beginnings.

Phrases

Phrases, as we learned in Chapter 10, are groups of related words that do not contain both a subject and a verb. The five phrases that follow can be positioned in various spots in a sentence, including the beginning. Phrases are one of the most common methods for creating variety in sentence openings.

- **Prepositional:** Phrases that begin with a preposition (*in, on, of, with, about, during*) and end with a noun or pronoun: *At* the table *down* the hall, Jody is waiting patiently.
- **Participial:** Phrases that begin with a participle—a verb form ending in the present tense with an *–ing* and in the past tense with a *-d/-ed* for regular verbs and often an *–n/–t* for irregular verbs—and words that together describe a noun or a pronoun:

  Present: *Swearing* repeatedly, Nina shook the thumb she had just hammered.

  Past: *Thrilled* by the honor, Quyen called his friends to tell them about his promotion.
- **Absolute:** Phrases that contain a participle (present or past) preceded by a noun or pronoun:

  Present: Her hair *standing* on end, Wanda announced that a storm must be on the way.

  Past: Her *car stripped* and *left* on blocks, Lidia was left without a ride.
- **Infinitive:** Phrases that begin with the word *to* in front of a base verb form (*to love, to laugh, to run*): *To reach* Shea Stadium by game time, Sal drove faster than he should have.
- **Appositive:** Phrases that contain a word that renames a noun or pronoun: A strong *supporter* of renewable energy sources, Catalina voted for a wind farm in her home state of Minnesota.

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ACTIVITY 32.5 *Creating Variety in Sentence Beginnings with Phrases*

Underline the introductory phrase in each sentence, and then write the name of the phrase in the parentheses.

EXAMPLE: Torn between work and family responsibilities (*past participial*), Serge decided not to work Saturdays.

1. In all of the planet's oceans ( ), plastic drift nets lost from boats are killing fish, turtles, seals, dolphins, and other animals.
2. A tourist attraction in Key West ( ), Ernest Hemingway's six-toed cats have found a good life in and around his museum.
3. Hanging on to bumpers ( ), Angelo and Connie slid along behind cars for a fun but dangerous ride.
4. Photographers snapping pictures from all sides ( ), the kayaker plunged through a spray of water over a 6-foot drop.
5. Charged with caring for the oceans ( ), the Ocean Conservancy is one of many environmental groups working to slow the destruction of the Earth's animals and natural resources.



Remember that participial and absolute phrases are similar, so look for a noun or pronoun in front of the participle to identify absolute phrases.

6. Her thoughts hidden from all but a select few ( ), Hadiya was quiet and soft-spoken.
7. To treat global warming seriously ( ), the government should fully fund research for renewable energy sources.
8. Write three sentences of your own that each begin with a different type of phrase. Be sure to identify the phrase and use a comma.

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

c. _____

_____







ACTIVITY 32.6 **WORKING ONLINE:** ***Analyzing Sentence Variety in an Article***

Read the article "It's Time to Drink Toilet Water" at http://www.slate.com/id/2182758/ and, in a paragraph, describe three ways in which the author effectively varies her sentences. In your examples paragraph, use at least two of these same methods. ●

ACTIVITY 32.7 **WORKING ONLINE** ***Sentence Variety Review***

Take the Chapter 32 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.

Chapter Summary

1. Variety in sentences depends primarily on length, type, and beginning.
2. Sentences in a paragraph should be a mix of lengths: short, medium, and long. Three or four sentences in a row may be roughly the same length, but the next one should be shorter or longer.
3. Compound sentences have a subject and verb on both sides of a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *so*, *or*, *for*, *nor*, *yet*).
4. Sentences may subordinate ideas in many ways, including with adjective clauses, which are often introduced by *who*, *which*, or *that*. *That* and *who* introduce **essential** clauses; *which* and *who* introduce **nonessential** clauses.
5. Sentences may subordinate information through adverb clauses.
6. Sentences may begin with transitional words (*first*, *second*, *however*, *next*) and adverbs (*–ly* words like happi*ly*).
7. Phrases can create sentence variety and can be especially useful in shaping beginnings.

Choosing Effective Words

33

[*How do these friends express personal or collective style? Is each person effective in conveying an image? How are your choices in presentation—wardrobe, hairstyle, accessories, and so on—similar to style choices in writing? Why do you think style matters in writing?*]



KEY TOPICS

- Using specific and concrete language
- Writing concisely
- Choosing language for tone

What Are We Trying to Achieve and Why?

The polishing phase of the writing process should include attention to **style**—that is, *how* we say what we say. Just as the photo on the preceding page shows a style, or way that people present themselves, so too can writing be "clothed" in a variety of words and arranged in ways that best suit the writer's purpose. In Chapter 32 we explored strategies for varying sentences. The focus of this chapter, then, is to help you make word and word arrangement choices that present your work in the most effective light.

Using Specific and Concrete Language

Choosing Specific Words

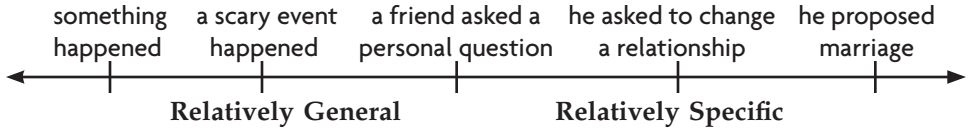
HINT

See Chapter 21 for more on general and specific words.

One of the most important elements of style is the choice of **general** or **specific** words. The more general a word, the larger the category that contains it; conversely, the more specific a word, the smaller the group it belongs to. For example, *food* is relatively general while *a Pizza Hut sausage and pepperoni pizza* is fairly specific.

Imagine that a friend says to you, "Something happened to me today." You reply, "What?" The friend says, "Something scary but exciting." You say, "Well, come on, spit it out." Your friend says, "I asked Amber a question." You are getting a bit annoyed at this point, so you say, "OK, tell me what you asked her." The friend says, "You know, a big question." You say, "Just tell me, or I'll put the headphones on, and you can talk to yourself." Your friend replies, "OK, OK, I asked her if she wants our relationship to be, you know, like more permanent." To try to end the unnecessary suspense, you leap to the conclusion and say it for him: "So, you *proposed* to Amber!"

We can illustrate this movement from general to specific on the following Language Line:



HINT

When using a thesaurus, take care to choose words you know.

This process of moving from the general category that contains all the "somethings" out there to a specific category like "marriage proposal" is a procedure that all writers go through when they check their work. If you want to communicate clearly with sharp images, choose specific words.

Avoiding General Verbs

Verbs can also be general or specific:

General: The baby is making sounds and moving about over there.

Specific: The baby is screaming and thrashing wildly on the changing table.

General: The player is making his way down the field.

Specific: Rodriguez snatches the pass one-handed and tears off downfield, breaking tackles as he sprints toward the end zone.

HINT

Be, do, have, make, and *get* often are weak verbs.

Specific verbs can help make writing more interesting and lively. Try to use them in your own work. As you revise, be especially alert to forms of the verbs *be, do, have, make,* and *get,* all of which can drain the energy from your sentences.

Avoiding General Describing Words

Also avoid falling into the "very, really, extremely" habit, using general describing words instead of more precise words. In a typical draft, four out of five of these empty intensifiers should be cut. They can often be replaced with more precise words.

AVOID CONSTRUCTIONS LIKE THESE:	FIX BY SUBSTITUTING MORE SPECIFIC WORDS:
It's very, very cold outside.	It's **frigid** outside.
He's really very angry.	He's **furious**.
She is really extremely thin.	She is **emaciated**.

OTHER OVERLY GENERAL WORDS

thing, nice, pretty, interesting, fun,
handsome, good looking, great, young, old,
good, bad, happy, sad

SENTENCE USING VAGUE WORDS

A very old person who had done some really interesting things was telling somebody about these great things and about some other fun things he did when growing up.

To improve this sentence in revision, the writer replaced most of the general terms with precise ones:

SENTENCE USING PRECISE WORDS

At 90, Winston Churchill reminisced to one of his biographers on the war years, when he had led England through the Blitz, submarine blockades, and near-defeat in Africa; he also discussed his early education, which he said he disliked, except for English, history, fencing, and marksmanship.

ACTIVITY 33.1 WORKING TOGETHER: *Revising for Specific Word Choice*



Discuss with group members the differences between relatively general and relatively specific terms. Next, revise the following sentences to improve their interest and clarity by choosing more specific words. Pay particular attention to the subjects and verbs, but also look for other vague words, such as *very*, and either cut or replace them.

EXAMPLE: The animal made some unpleasant noises and moved something around the room.

Revised: *The beagle whined and nudged his food bowl around with his nose.*

1. The children were moving around in the watery area and doing fun things.

_____

2. The large structure was full of people moving in and out of very interesting stores and doing things in those stores.

_____

_____

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3. A person threw it a long way, and it was caught by someone else, who moved a long way with it.

4. Some people were doing work on the beginning of a house while across the street other people were doing some things on the top of a house.

5. In a place where very many people were sitting, food items were being moved very quickly by people who took the food to the people.

Writing Concisely

Another important concept in revising for style is **concision**—saying what we mean with no wasted words. In the rush of getting ideas onto paper, writers often include everything that pops into their minds, so first drafts may resemble this example:

DRAFT: WORDY PASSAGE

Well, I think that I can safely say with some degree of certainty that there are many really very good reasons that a student would want to take the time to get himself or herself ready to take an examination in school or any other place of learning where the student or students might find it necessary to take an exam. I can say from my own experience and from the experience of almost everybody I know that when a student studies he or she will feel less stress before, during, and after the examination. Also, most people would agree that when students take the time to prepare properly for a test or exam or other school academic challenge that they will usually do better on the test and make a higher grade as well.

This revision for concision gets to the point, eliminating unneeded repetition, imprecise words, and stalling phrases:

REVISION: CONCISE SENTENCE

Being prepared for an exam decreases stress and improves grades.

Shrinking the passage from 136 words to 10 increases economy and clarity. The point in trimming deadwood is not to cut all repetition—repetition can be used for emphasis—or to write short sentences. We just want to remove words that interfere with meaning.

Revising for economy and clarity means reducing the following:

- Redundant expressions
- Padded phrases
- Unnecessary detail
- Inflated clauses and phrases

English Review Note

Using concise words may be difficult when translating from your native language, but try to find the clearest way to say what you mean.

Avoiding Redundant Expressions

Some unnecessary words creep into sentences as **redundant expressions**, words that repeat an idea already expressed, as in the following example:

> My wife and I were looking and searching for some old antique candle holders that were small in size and dark in color, but we found that there were few in number at the flea market, where we shopped and hunted for bargains.

Eliminating the redundant phrases, we have a clearer, more concise sentence:

> My wife and I were searching for some small, dark antique candle holders, but we found that there were few at the flea market, where we shopped for bargains.

REDUNDANT PAIRS, MODIFIERS, AND CATEGORIES TO AVOID

adequate enough	first and foremost	intentionally try	return again
circle around	free gift	link together	small in size
climb up	gather together	old antiques	square in shape
continue on	heavy in weight	past history	sum total
cooperate together	hopes and wishes	proceeded to go	terrible tragedy
each and every one	if and when	red in color	true facts
few in number	important essentials		

Omitting Empty and Padded Phrases

Writers can also bog readers down with empty and padded phrases. **Empty phrases** (or words), which add no meaning to a sentence, are best simply cut. Usually, they can be dropped from a sentence without altering the meaning in any way:

EMPTY WORDS AND PHRASES

absolutely	certain	in kind	really
actually	character of	in terms of	situation of
area of	definitely	kind of	sort of
aspect of	element of	manner	thing
awfully	extremely	nature of	type of
basically	factor	quite	very

Padded phrases are stock expressions that use more words than needed to make their point—for example, *due to the fact that*, meaning *because*:

> Due to the fact that Ian is broke, he's staying home tonight.
>
> Because Ian is broke, he's staying home tonight.

The word *because* is a simpler, better choice.

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COMMON PADDED PHRASES AND CONCISE SUBSTITUTES

Padded Phrases	Concise Substitutes
at the present time, at this point in time, at the present moment, in this day and age	now, today
during that time, in the time when, in those days	then, when
at all times	always
despite (regardless of) the fact that	although
due to the fact that, the reason is because, for the reason that, considering the fact that	because
located close by	near
in the event that	if
by means of	by
form a consensus of opinion	agree
a large number of	many
few in number	few
aware of the fact that	know
refer back	refer
in the final analysis	finally
sufficient amount of	enough
make contact with	contact, meet
for the purpose of	for
in a situation in which, in the event that	when, if
is in a position to, has the opportunity to	can
it is important (crucial/critical) that	must
there is a chance that	may
during the time that	while
all of a sudden	suddenly

ACTIVITY 33.2 *Revising for Concision*

Discuss the following sentences, and then cut redundancies and empty/padded phrases. You may need to add words or restructure a sentence, but keep the main ideas intact.

EXAMPLE: As anyone can plainly see, year-round schooling is a critical issue that certainly requires action, and it is vitally important that we give our undivided support to change the school system in this respect, or students' academic performance will inevitably continue to decline and sink.

Revised: *People should support year-round schooling, or students' academic performance will continue to decline.*

1. I think there is a chance that scientists and government officials from around the world may have gathered together recently in Bali, Indonesia, to frame a new and current plan and to form a consensus

of opinion for the purpose of helping combat and reduce global warming, which many people think may be a bit of a problem for some people at some point in time, based on its past history.

2. It seems to me that it was some time in March, like maybe on the 29th, that George Bush and, what's her name, oh, yes, Nancy Pelosi, who is a leader in Washington, D.C., possibly the House Speaker, cooperated together to present an award and honor (it might have been the Congressional Medal of Honor) to World War II veteran soldiers and warriors known as the Tuskegee Airmen, who served bravely and with great courage in World War II.

3. Obviously, we should all be aware of the fact that the parking problem on campus is without a doubt the most crucially pressing problem facing a large number of the students at this college, and, clearly, in the final analysis, the administration should take steps to solve this critical and vital problem, or students' education will inevitably suffer.

Cutting Unnecessary Examples, Details, and Explanations

The overuse of **examples**, **details**, and **explanations** can also make sentences wordy. Often in first drafts writers lose sight of their audience, forgetting what readers already know or want to know about a subject.

Consider the following paragraph, which reminds an adult how to enter a highway:

DRAFT

Accelerate by putting your foot on the gas pedal, that pedal on the floor of your car next to the brake. But don't confuse the brake with the gas pedal. The brake is more rectangular and is to the *left* of the gas pedal, which is skinnier and longer and to the *right* of the brake. Now accelerate by going faster along the on-ramp, which is like a part of the highway but really is not because it is more off to the side and often actually slopes like it is the side of a small hill because you may be entering from an overpass, which is like a bridge that lets cars run over and above the highway. As you go fast along the ramp, you will move into what is called the "acceleration lane," which is really just a continuation of the on-ramp, but you should pay close attention to the white or yellow solid painted line that divides the acceleration lane from the rest of the highway because you should not cross over this line until it is safe to do so, meaning that you have checked for traffic and have reached a safe entering speed. Now is a good time to activate your turn signal, which is the little metal arm that usually projects from the left side of your steering column, which is the metal post that your steering wheel attaches to. . . .

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If reading this paragraph of instructions wears you out, that is understandable. When writers forget who they are writing for—what that audience really needs or wants to know—this sort of tedious overwriting often results. If we strip away the unneeded examples, details, and explanations from the above paragraph, we can provide clearer and more concise instructions without losing our main point.

REVISION As you accelerate along the on-ramp, bringing your car up to highway speed, use your turn signal and check your mirrors—both rear and side view—for traffic. Also, glance to your left to check the blind spot near your bumper. Midway along the acceleration lane, being careful not to prematurely cross the solid dividing line, find a gap in the traffic, be sure your speed is sufficient, and carefully merge into the gap. **Caution:** It is extremely dangerous to stop on entry ramps!

ACTIVITY 33.3 *Removing Unneeded Examples, Details, and Explanations*



As you read this passage, ask yourself, "How much of this information would I need to avoid these distractions?"

Read the following paragraph, and revise it (on separate paper) to remove unneeded examples, details, and explanations. The purpose of the paragraph is to *briefly* explain to an adult driver how to avoid distractions inside a car while behind the wheel.

When driving, one good way to avoid accidents is to limit distractions inside the car. Before you take off, adjust those mechanical conveniences inside the car, like the seat, steering wheel, mirrors, and music. The seat can be adjusted forward or backward and often up or down, and sometimes there is a lumbar support to work with. Of course, the steering wheel often can be pulled forward somewhat or raised or lowered (which you do usually by pulling on this little knob on the steering column, which is the metal post with the steering wheel attached to it). The mirrors should be self-explanatory, but just as a reminder sometimes you have to adjust them manually, and sometimes they are electronic. Remember that objects often appear farther away than they really are in the right side-view mirror (which always seems weird to me, how tiny cars look, I mean). For your music, you might as well preset some radio stations and have iPod playlists ready. Next, limit people distractions as much as possible. Parents, make sure the kids are belted in and can't squirm free, that is, of course, unless they are teenagers, in which case they may not listen to you anyway (ha-ha). Also, it is a good idea to postpone any screaming fits until after you reach your destination. Another problem for many drivers is food and drink. If you must eat in the car, lay out the food where you can reach it and have those napkins ready for the spills. It's never a good idea to hold hot coffee between your legs while you drive (for obvious reasons!). If you have a DVD player (maybe your car came with one or you have a portable one or maybe you rented one or you borrowed one from a friend or relative), leave the movies to your passengers. Finally, avoid using cell phones if possible, or at least limit the conversations, and buy a hands-free headset, which you don't have to hold. About half of the accidents people have while driving occur from outside problems, which are hard to control, but we can do something about the other half, the inside distractions.

Choosing Language for Tone

Beyond eliminating nonessential words, writers should consider other elements of language that affect the **tone** of their work—that is, the *attitude* they reveal toward the subject and their audience. Which of the following sentences would be more appropriate for casual conversation and which for an academic paper?

1. Hitler was the man in Nazi Germany. But he was a wacko with a dorky-looking mustache who thought he was bad because he had the power to blow away so many people.

2. Adolf Hitler was the leader of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, before and during World War II. He was an unstable psychopath who murdered 6 million Jews and was responsible for the deaths of countless other civilians and soldiers.

In casual contexts, people often use the idioms and slang terms that their group is familiar with. Clearly, example 1 is geared to this sort of casual exchange. However, in academic settings, where a more formal tone is required, example 2 would be much more appropriate. The rest of this chapter will help you gain control over your written tone and style.



As a writer, you should be flexible enough to use language to your advantage in many different settings.

Avoiding Slang and Colloquial Expressions

Slang terms are typically short-lived invented words that are understood by specific peer groups but that are often considered vague or unacceptable by those outside the group. Slang can be colorful and often expresses strong emotions, as in the following expressions: *dissed, wired,* and *psyched out*. Text messaging abbreviations like *LOL, G2G,* and *BBL* also fall into this informal category.

Colloquial terms are similar to slang—sometimes indistinguishable from it—but are typically understood by a wider audience. Examples include words like *a hit*, meaning "a success," or shortened words, like *exec* for *executive*.

Slang and colloquialisms are appropriate for informal gatherings but are usually avoided in more formal writing. Slang almost never appears in academic writing, and colloquial terms are used only occasionally to deliberately vary the tone.



To achieve a relatively formal tone, replace all slang and most colloquialisms with more standard usage.

SOME COMMONLY USED SLANG EXPRESSIONS

airhead	digits	mad
awesome	(to) diss	my bad
babe	down with	old school
bad	dude	pig
(to) barf	duh	psyched
bling	(to) dump on	ride (noun)
blown away	(to) flame	(to) rip off
(to) book	(the) 411	sweet
(to) boost	freaked out	uber
buff	geek	waddup/wassup
(to) bum	gig	was all/was like
bummed	(to) go postal	wasted
(to) bust	(to) hassle	whacked
(to) chill	(to) hit on	wicked
(to) chill out	(to) hook up	wired
cool	hot	yo
couch potato	laid back	
crib	LOL	

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ACTIVITY 33.4 WORKING TOGETHER: *Translating Slang*

Choose any five of the terms in the preceding chart, and discuss their meaning with members of your group. Next, write a sentence using each slang term, followed by another sentence replacing the term with less-informal language; underline the term and its replacement.

EXAMPLE:

Slang version: *It blew me away to learn my insurance had risen to $3,000 a year.*

Revision: *I was shocked to learn my insurance had risen to $3,000 a year.*

1. Slang version: _____

   Revision: _____

2. Slang version: _____

   Revision: _____

3. Slang version: _____

   Revision: _____

4. Slang version: _____

   Revision: _____

5. Slang version: _____

   Revision: _____

HINT

You may need several words to convey your meaning. You may also find that your interpretation of a slang word varies from that of others in your group.

ACTIVITY 33.5 WORKING ONLINE: *Choosing Words, Making Choices*

Conservation in Context



What is your dream vacation? Where would you go, and how would you get there? Take these Sierra Club quizzes to learn how green your dream vacation is—both the destination and the journey.

How Green Is My Destination?

http://www.sierraclub.org/howgreen/destination/

How Green Is My Getaway?

http://www.sierraclub.org/howgreen/getaway/

Write a paragraph describing three specific choices you could make that would make your dream trip more earth friendly. Check your work to be sure you have used specific language, avoided redundant expressions, and been as concise as possible. ●

ACTIVITY 33.6 **WORKING ONLINE: *Word Choice Review***

Take the Chapter 33 Review Quiz at www.mhhe.com/brannan.



Chapter Summary

1. Style in writing largely consists of word choices and arrangement.
2. Specific words create sharper images than general ones.
3. Concision in writing means cutting words that serve no purpose.
4. Writers can achieve concision by controlling the following points: redundant expressions, empty and padded phrases, and unnecessary details.
5. Tone can be defined as the attitude a writer reveals toward his or her subject and audience.
6. Slang and colloquial expressions are best kept to a minimum or eliminated altogether from more formal writing.

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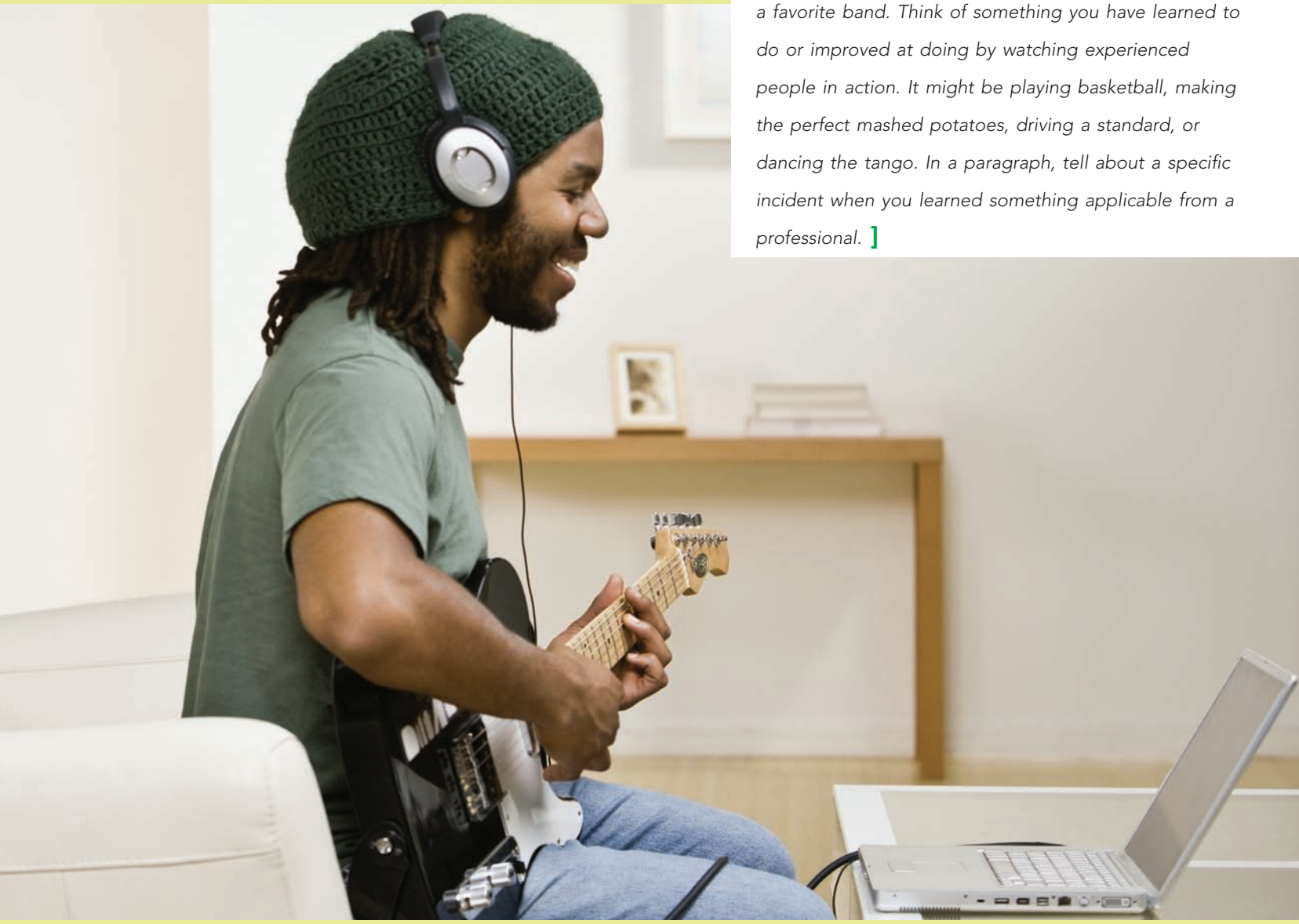
Learning from Professional Essay Models

7

BRANNAN



Description	● "Guavas" by Esmeralda Santiago ● "Heaven and Earth in Jest" by Annie Dillard
Narration	● "Salvation" by Langston Hughes ● "The Struggle to Be an All-American Girl" by Elizabeth Wong ● "The Heroes the Healing: Military Medicine from the Front Lines to the Home Front" by Neil Shea
Illustration	● "English Is a Crazy Language" by Richard Lederer ● "What Really Scares Us?" by David Ropeik
Cause and Effect	● "Insight: Overfishing Is Creating a Jellyfish Plague" by Debora Mackenzie ● "Gilded Age, Gilded Cage" by Leslie T. Chang
Process Description	● "How to Surf" by Tim Maddux ● "Earth in the Beginning" by Tim Appenzeller (with photo essay by Frans Lanting)
Comparison and Contrast	● "Patriotism or Nationalism" by Joseph Sobran ● "*Spider-Man 2* Movie Review: Rami Snares Us in His Web Once More" by Rebecca Murray
Classification	● "Doublespeak" by William Lutz ● "A Healthy Drink? Try Plain Water" by Temma Ehrenfeld
Definition	● "Ambition" by Perri Klass ● "Instant Expert: Climate Change" by Fred Pearce
Persuasion	● "Nobel Lecture 2007" by Al Gore ● "The Semantics of Murder" by Amir Taheri



[*This man improves his guitar skills by playing along with a favorite band. Think of something you have learned to do or improved at doing by watching experienced people in action. It might be playing basketball, making the perfect mashed potatoes, driving a standard, or dancing the tango. In a paragraph, tell about a specific incident when you learned something applicable from a professional.*]

Why Reading Professional Models Is Useful

Although our focus in this text has been the paragraph, you may be writing essays in other classes; you have undoubtedly written them in the past, and you will certainly be writing them throughout college. Therefore, it is good to have some additional examples of multi-paragraph writing. The essays and excerpts in Unit Seven follow most of the conventions of effective writing that you have practiced this semester. However, as you read these models, don't be surprised if a topic or thesis sentence seems "out of place" or a paragraph seems a bit long or short. Keep in mind that even the most seasoned professionals develop good and bad habits over the years, and just as you do, they make mistakes and write published sentences they wish they could revise.

Notice, especially, how the writers combine the patterns of development (PODs) from Unit Four to suit their purposes and to explore their topics for their readers.

HINT

For detailed coverage of description, see Chapter 21.

Description

Guavas

BY ESMERALDA SANTIAGO

In Chapter 21 we focused on describing a place, but writers also describe people, animals, objects, and experiences. The following selection is the prologue from *When I Was a Puerto Rican*, by Esmeralda Santiago. In the essay Santiago describes a fruit from her country in great detail, combining sensory details with specific word choices. If you have never eaten or seen a guava, after reading this essay, do you think that you could pick one out in a supermarket? What is the main point (dominant impression) the author makes about guavas?



Barco que no anda, no llega a puerto.
A ship that doesn't sail, never reaches port.

1 There are guavas at the Shop & Save. I pick one the size of a tennis ball and finger the prickly stem end. It feels familiarly bumpy and firm. The guava is not quite ripe; the skin is still a dark green. I smell it and imagine a pale pink center, the seeds tightly embedded in the flesh.

2 A ripe guava is yellow, although some varieties have a pink tinge. The skin is thick, firm, and sweet. Its heart is bright pink and almost solid with seeds. The most delicious part of the guava surrounds the tiny seeds. If you don't know how to eat a guava, the seeds end up in the crevices between your teeth.

3 When you bite into a ripe guava, your teeth must grip the bumpy surface and sink into the thick edible skin without hitting the center. It takes experience to do this, as it's quite tricky to determine how far beyond the skin the seeds begin.

4 Some years, when the rains have been plentiful and the nights cool, you can bite into a guava and not find many seeds. The guava bushes grow close to the ground, their branches laden with green then yellow fruit that seem to ripen overnight. These guavas are large and juicy, almost seedless, their roundness enticing you to have one more, just one more, because next year the rains may not come.

laden
loaded down

As children, we didn't always wait for the fruit to ripen. We raided the bushes as soon as the guavas were large enough to bend the branch. 5

A green guava is sour and hard. You bite into it at its widest point, because it's easier to grasp with your teeth. You hear the skin, meat, and seeds crunching inside your head, while the inside of your mouth explodes in little spurts of sour. 6

You grimace, your eyes water, and your cheeks disappear as your lips purse into a tight O. But you have another and then another, enjoying the crunchy sounds, the acid taste, the gritty texture of the unripe center. At night, your mother makes you drink castor oil, which she says tastes better than a green guava. That's when you know for sure that you're a child and she has stopped being one. 7

grimace wince, make a contorted facial expression

I had my last guava the day we left Puerto Rico. It was large and juicy, almost red in the center, and so fragrant that I didn't want to eat it because I would lose the smell. All the way to the airport I scratched at it with my teeth, making little dents in the skin, chewing small pieces with my front teeth, so that I could feel the texture against my tongue, the tiny pink pellets of sweet. 8

Today, I stand before a stack of dark green guavas, each perfectly round and hard, each $1.59. The one in my hand is tempting. It smells faintly of late summer afternoons and hopscotch under the mango tree. But this is autumn in New York, and I'm no longer a child. 9

The guava joins its sisters under the harsh fluorescent lights of the exotic fruit display. I push my cart away, toward the apples and pears of my adulthood, their nearly seedless ripeness predictable and bittersweet. 10

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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. What is the dominant impression in this essay, and in what paragraph is it first clearly stated?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: which paragraphs use process description; which paragraphs use comparisons or contrasts?
3. List five instances of specific language.
4. How effectively does the author use sensory details? List every detail you can find for sound, smell, taste, and touch.
5. Paragraph 9 marks the author's transition from her past to her present and eases readers into her conclusion and expanded thought. What do you think Santiago is trying to tell us when she comments on apples and pears? What is the significance of her putting the guava back with the other "exotic fruit" and walking toward the apples and pears?
6. Paragraphs 5–7 talk about eating unripe fruit. Does the author's experience of eating unripe fruit as a child help you identify with her, and if so, in what way?
7. Go to http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/americancollection/woman/timeline.html and read the brief illustrated history "Puerto Rico: A Timeline." What can a descriptive piece like "Guavas" tell you about Puerto Rico that a timeline can't?



Conservation in Context

Heaven and Earth in Jest

BY ANNIE DILLARD

This next description is an excerpt from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, a book by Annie Dillard. This author is well known for her detailed descriptions of nature and musings on how she and other human beings fit into the natural world. As you read, pay special attention to the images Dillard evokes through metaphor and simile and how she uses action to focus readers on the frog's fate.



dire
dreadful and urgent

schematic diagram
a drawing that details the elements of a system

ruck
to crease or become creased

enzymes
proteins produced by living things

1 A couple of summers ago I was walking along the edge of the island to see what I could see in the water, and mainly to scare frogs. Frogs have an inelegant way of taking off from invisible positions on the bank just ahead of your feet, in dire panic, emitting a froggy "Yike!" and splashing into the water. Incredibly, this amused me, and, incredibly, it amuses me still. As I walked along the grassy edge of the island, I got better and better at seeing frogs both in and out of the water. I learned to recognize, slowing down, the difference in texture of the light reflected from mudbank, water, grass, or frog. Frogs were flying all around me. At the end of the island I noticed a small green frog. He was exactly half in and half out of the water, looking like a schematic diagram of an amphibian, and he didn't jump.

2 He didn't jump; I crept closer. At last I knelt on the island's winterkilled grass, lost, dumbstruck, staring at the frog in the creek just four feet away. He was a very small frog with wide, dull eyes. And just as I looked at him, he slowly crumpled and began to sag. The spirit vanished from his eyes as if snuffed. His skin emptied and drooped; his very skull seemed to collapse and settle like a kicked tent. He was shrinking before my eyes like a deflating football. I watched the taut, glistening skin on his shoulders ruck, and rumple, and fall. Soon, part of his skin, formless as a pricked balloon, lay in floating folds like bright scum on top of the water: it was a monstrous and terrifying thing. I gaped bewildered, appalled. An oval shadow hung in the water behind the drained frog; then the shadow glided away. The frog skin bag started to sink.

3 I had read about the giant water bug, but never seen one. "Giant water bug" is really the name of the creature, which is an enormous, heavy-bodied brown bug. It eats insects, tadpoles, fish, and frogs. Its grasping forelegs are mighty and hooked inward. It seizes a victim with these legs, hugs it tight, and paralyzes it with enzymes injected during a vicious bite. That one bite is the only bite it ever takes. Through the puncture shoot the poisons that dissolve the victim's muscles and bones and organs—all but the skin—and through it the giant water bug sucks out the victim's body, reduced to a juice. This event is quite common in warm fresh water. The frog I saw was being sucked by a giant water bug. I had been kneeling on the island grass; when the unrecognizable flap of frog skin settled on the creek bottom, swaying, I stood up and brushed the knees of my pants. I couldn't catch my breath.

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. How does the introduction hint at the dominant impression?
2. What is the dominant impression in this description? In which sentence is it most clearly stated?
3. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: How does Dillard draw readers into this small spectacle in nature? Why might a reader come to care about the frog's fate?
4. Which of the three paragraphs is developed primarily with process description? Does the description help you understand how the brown bug feeds?
5. Choose two metaphors or similes and discuss how they add to the power of Dillard's description.
6. Why do you suppose Dillard uses short sentences like the following: "He didn't jump; I crept closer" (paragraph 2) and "I couldn't catch my breath" (paragraph 3)?
7. Go to http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4270641 and listen to Dillard discuss lives lost in the December 2004 tsunami. How does she use description to effectively make her point?



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Narration

Salvation

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

This personal narrative by Langston Hughes, "Salvation," brings us into the story immediately, drawing our focus toward the *conflict*, Hughes's possible redemption. The *pace* is quick, moving readers into the evangelical church in the first paragraph, developing *tension/suspense* as the story progresses, and bringing the narrative to a clear *climax*. Hughes gives us just enough details of the setting to serve as a backdrop for the action, includes useful *dialogue* that characterizes and advances the action, and resolves the story in the final paragraph so that the reader clearly understands the *significance* of the event to the author.



For detailed coverage of narration, see Chapter 22.



I was saved from sin when I was going on thirteen. But not really saved. 1
It happened like this. There was a big revival at my Auntie Reed's church. Every night for weeks there had been much preaching, singing, praying, and shouting, and some very hardened sinners had been brought to Christ, and the membership of the church had grown by leaps and bounds. Then just before the revival ended, they held a special meeting for children, "to bring the young lambs to the fold." My aunt spoke of it for days ahead. That night, I was escorted to the front row and placed on the mourner's bench with all other young sinners, who had not yet been brought to Jesus.

My aunt told me that when you were saved you saw a light, and something 2
happened to you inside! And Jesus came into your life! And God was with

you from then on! She said you could see and hear and feel Jesus in your soul. I believed her. I had heard a great many old people say the same thing and it seemed to me they ought to know. So I sat there calmly in the hot, crowded church, waiting for Jesus to come to me.

3 The preacher preached a wonderful rhythmical sermon, all moans and shouts and lonely cries and dire pictures of hell, and then he sang a song about the ninety and nine safe in the fold, but one little lamb was left out in the cold. Then he said: "Won't you come? Won't you come to Jesus? Young lambs, won't you come?" and he held out his arms to all us young sinners there on the mourner's bench. And the little girls cried. And some of them jumped up and went to Jesus right away. But most of us just sat there.

4 A great many old people came and knelt around us and prayed, old women with jet-black faces and braided hair, old men with work-gnarled hands. And the church sang a song about the lower lights are burning, some poor sinners to be saved. And the whole building rocked with prayer and song.

gnarled
twisted, bent

5 Still I kept waiting to *see* Jesus.

6 Finally all the young people had gone to the altar and were saved, but one boy and me. He was a rounder's son named Westley. Westley and I were surrounded by sisters and deacons praying. It was very hot in the church, and getting late now. Finally Westley said to me in a whisper. "God damn! I'm tired o' sitting here. Let's get up and be saved." So he got up and was saved.

rounder
a dissolute person, one who lacks moral restraint

7 Then I was left all alone on the mourner's bench. My aunt came and knelt at my knees and cried, while prayers and songs swirled all around me in the little church. The whole congregation prayed for me alone, in a mighty wail of moans and voices. And I kept waiting serenely for Jesus, waiting, waiting—but he didn't come. I wanted to see him, but nothing happened to me. Nothing! I wanted something to happen to me, but nothing happened.

serenely
peacefully

8 I heard the songs and the minister saying. "Why don't you come? My dear child, why don't you come to Jesus? Jesus is waiting for you. He wants you. Why don't you come? Sister Reed, what is this child's name?"

9 "Langston," my aunt sobbed.

10 "Langston, why don't you come? Why don't you come and be saved? Oh, Lamb of God! Why don't you come?"

11 Now it was really getting late. I began to be ashamed of myself, holding everything up so long. I began to wonder what God thought about Westley, who certainly hadn't seen Jesus either, but who was now sitting proudly on the platform, swinging his knickerbockered legs and grinning down at me, surrounded by deacons and old women on their knees praying. God had not struck Westley dead for taking his name in vain or for lying in the temple. So I decided that maybe to save further trouble, I'd better lie, too, and say that Jesus had come, and get up and be saved.

knickerbockered
wearing short pants, or knickers

12 So I go up.

13 Suddenly the whole room broke into a sea of shouting, as they saw me rise. Waves of rejoicing swept the place. Women leaped in the air. My aunt threw her arms around me. The minister took me by the hand and led me to the platform.

When things quieted down, in a hushed silence, punctuated by a few ecstatic "Amens," all the new young lambs were blessed in the name of God. Then joyous singing filled the room. 14

That night, for the last time in my life but one—for I was a big boy twelve years old—I cried. I cried, in bed alone, and couldn't stop. I buried my head under the quilts, but my aunt heard me. She woke up and told my uncle I was crying because the Holy Ghost had come into my life, and because I had seen Jesus. But I was really crying because I couldn't bear to tell her that I had lied, that I had deceived everybody in the church, that I hadn't seen Jesus, and that now I didn't believe there was a Jesus any more, since he didn't come to help me. 15

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. How does the introduction orient readers and ease them into the story?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: Where is dialogue used well? Why do you think so?
3. What is the irony in the aunt's insistence that Hughes not only attend the church service but that he *must* be saved?
4. Contrast Westley's response to the pressure from the congregation to be "saved" with Hughes's response. What do the characters' reactions say about them?
5. In paragraph 11, what does Hughes observe that helps him decide to pretend to be saved?
6. What is the significance/point of this story to you? What do you think it meant to Hughes?
7. Many of Hughes's poems tell stories, too. Go to http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15614 and read "Theme for English B." What are the hook, development, and focus of this narrative?



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The Struggle to Be an All-American Girl

BY ELIZABETH WONG



Unlike Langston Hughes, this author does not tell a single organized story. Instead, journalist and playwright Elizabeth Wong writes—in an essay for the *Los Angeles Times*—about a time in her childhood, making her point through one extended **anecdote** (brief story) and several shorter ones. However, language is a central element in the essay, uniting the anecdotes. How important do you think language is in defining a culture? Do immigrants to any country have to learn the language well before they can be considered truly part of their new culture?

It's still there, the Chinese school on Yale Street where my brother and I used to go. Despite the new coat of paint and the high wire fence, the school I knew 10 years ago remains remarkably, stoically the same. 1

stoically
impassively, without showing emotion

2 Every day at 5 P.M., instead of playing with our fourth- and fifth-grade friends or sneaking out to the empty lot to hunt ghosts and animal bones, my brother and I had to go to Chinese school. No amount of kicking, screaming, or pleading could dissuade my mother, who was solidly determined to have us learn the language of our heritage.

3 Forcibly, she walked us the seven long, hilly blocks from our home to school, depositing our defiant tearful faces before the stern principal. My only memory of him is that he swayed on his heels like a palm tree, and he always clasped his impatient twitching hands behind his back. I recognized him as a repressed maniacal child killer, and knew that if we ever saw his hands we'd be in big trouble.

4 We all sat in little chairs in an empty auditorium. The room smelled like Chinese medicine, an imported faraway mustiness. Like ancient mothballs or dirty closets. I hated that smell. I favored crisp new scents. Like the soft French perfume that my American teacher wore in public school.

5 There was a stage far to the right, flanked by an American flag and the flag of the Nationalist Republic of China, which was also red, white and blue but not as pretty.

kowtow
to kneel and touch the forehead to the ground

6 Although the emphasis at the school was mainly language—speaking, reading, writing—the lessons always began with an exercise in politeness. With the entrance of the teacher, the best student would tap a bell and everyone would get up, kowtow, and chant, "Sing san ho," the phonetic for "How are you, teacher?"

ideograph
a graphic symbol

7 Being ten years old, I had better things to learn than ideographs copied painstakingly in lines that ran right to left from the tip of a *moc but*, a real ink pen that had to be held in an awkward way if blotches were to be avoided. After all, I could do the multiplication tables, name the satellites of Mars, and write reports on "Little Women" and "Black Beauty." Nancy Drew, my favorite book heroine, never spoke Chinese.

8 The language was a source of embarrassment. More times than not, I had tried to disassociate myself from the nagging loud voice that followed me wherever I wandered in the nearby American supermarket outside Chinatown. The voice belonged to my grandmother, a fragile woman in her seventies who could outshout the best of the street vendors. Her humor was raunchy, her Chinese rhythmless, patternless. It was quick, it was loud, it was unbeautiful. It was not like the quiet, lilting romance of French or the gentle refinement of the American South. Chinese sounded pedestrian, Public.

pedestrian
commonplace

9 In Chinatown, the comings and goings of hundreds of Chinese on their daily tasks sounded chaotic and frenzied. I did not want to be thought of as mad, as talking gibberish. When I spoke English, people nodded at me, smiled sweetly, said encouraging words. Even the people in my culture would cluck and say that I'd do well in life. "My, doesn't she move her lips fast," they would say, meaning that I'd be able to keep up with the world outside Chinatown.

gibberish
nonsense

10 My brother was even more fanatical than I about speaking English. He was especially hard on my mother, criticizing her, often cruelly, for her pidgin speech—smatterings of Chinese scattered like chop suey in her conversation. "It's not 'What it is', Mom," he'd say in exasperation. "It's 'What *is* it, what *is* it, what *is* it!'" Sometimes Mom might leave out an occasional "the" or "a," or perhaps a verb of being. He would stop her in mid-sentence: "Say it again,

pidgin
a mix of two or more languages

Mom. Say it right." When he tripped over his own tongue, he'd blame it on her: "See, Mom, it's all your fault. You set a bad example."

What infuriated my mother most was when my brother cornered her on her consonants, especially "r." My father had played a cruel joke on Mom by assigning her an American name that her tongue wouldn't allow her to say. No matter how hard she tried, "Ruth" always ended up "Luth" or "Roof." 11

After two years of writing with a *moc but* and reciting words with multiples of meanings, I finally was granted a cultural divorce. I was permitted to stop Chinese school. 12

I thought of myself as multicultural. I preferred tacos to egg rolls; I enjoyed Cinco de Mayo more than Chinese New Year. 13

At last, I was one of you; I wasn't one of them. 14

Sadly, I still am. 15

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook and focus. Why would the author use the word *stoically* to refer to the school? How does the word relate to Wong's main point in the narrative?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: Where is dialogue (direct and indirect) or revealed thought used well? Why do you think so?
3. In which paragraph does Wong move from the Chinese school anecdote? What word helps readers transition between these two paragraphs?
4. What are the main elements of conflict in this essay (between people and within the author)?
5. Name three specific details that help you feel part of the narrative.
6. Paragraphs 12–15 conclude the essay. In the final sentence, why does Wong say *sadly*, and how does this comment relate to the significance of the essay to her?
7. Elizabeth Wong is known mostly as a playwright. Working with a partner or in small groups, try writing a very small portion of this essay entirely in dialogue, as it might be acted out in one scene of a TV show. Learning to write dialogue well is a great asset in narration.



The Heroes the Healing: Military Medicine from the Front Lines to the Home Front

BY NEIL SHEA



Just as narrative can be a fictional story or a personal narrative focused primarily on the writer, so too can narrative focus on others. The journalist Neil Shea takes this approach in the following excerpt from a *National Geographic* article exploring the lives of U.S. medical personnel in Iraq. Notice the elements of well-crafted narrative at work: a focused introduction full of action and scene details, background material to orient readers in the scene, smooth time and place transitions (especially between scenes), suspense in the race back to the base with the wounded soldier, useful dialogue, climax, and significance.

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1 The war is on hold. The soldiers of Charlie 2-4 sprawl on battered chairs and couches in dust-lined rooms that stink of sweat and half-eaten meals. They stare at pirated DVDs, thumbing through gun magazines, car magazines, even copies of *Glamour*. Some wrestle like brothers cooped in a snowbound house, boots clomping past stacked rifles, insults riding over radio static. For 12 hours, nothing has happened. The men, crews of one of the busiest medevac helicopter units in Iraq, have fought only boredom. A feeling gathers that something is coming, that they're due. No one mentions it. That would break taboo.

taboo
something forbidden or frowned upon by society

2 Outside, a sea of stars spreads above the trailers and shipping containers that compose this base. The lights of Baghdad bloom on the horizon, making the place feel removed, safe, although insurgents have lately been lobbing mortars over the 20-foot walls. Elsewhere, infantry units roll out on patrols or return for midnight meals. Generators hum. Spring-armed doors clap shut as soldiers go to shower away the day's dust.

3 The men of Charlie 2-4 fly Black Hawks over a landscape too dangerous, too wrecked for road travel. They fly into the hot, violent cities, the mud-brick towns, the nowhere stretches of desert, picking up American and Iraqi soldiers, civilians, and, sometimes, enemy fighters. For medevac crews, there are missions, and the space in between. Earlier today, Charlie 2-4 rescued three Iraqi boys wounded in a bomb blast in a rural field. Blood and mud caked their bodies, stubs of straw clung to their bare backs like a pelt. The mission reset the clock, the psychic countdown. Now comes a rush of static and an anxious, tinny voice on the radio: Insurgents have attacked a U.S. Army patrol somewhere on a highway south of Baghdad. One of the soldiers is badly wounded.

4 A four-man crew sprints to the flight line, loose gear bouncing on shoulders. They stow their rifles, slip on sweat-greased helmets. The pilot and copilot spin up the Black Hawk's rotors and speed through the preflight checklists. A sweet, dizzying breath of fuel washes over them. David Mitchell, the flight medic, scans the cabin: litter pans for stretchers, four of them, jut from the sides of the helicopter like berths on a ship. Oxygen tanks, heart monitors, bandages, bags of saline, all of it ready, wedged into crooks, compartments.

5 The crew tenses, especially Mitchell. The tall, 29-year-old sergeant is earnest and usually quiet, a polite southern boy. Excited or nervous, his eyes widen and he curses more, a habit he's trying to curb. As he sorts the last of his gear, he swears, a single word, the sound of it lost in the clatter of rotor blades.

6 The helo slides loud and low over the desert. In the cockpit, the pilots scan for muzzle flashes, tracers, warning each other of low-hanging wires. In back, Mitchell thinks through scenarios. He decides where he will put the patient. He imagines what might go wrong, what he will do. Medics learn quickly to solve problems, or at least keep them from worsening. Much of their job comes down to plumbing: Plug the leaks, stop the bleeding. Speed is key. If medics hold fluids in, if the helicopter moves fast enough, the wounded win time.

Waldo
character in a picture book series

7 Mitchell is from Waldo, Arkansas, population 1,600, in the southwest corner of the state. The Where's Waldo? jokes no longer amuse him. He is a father of four boys and was married on September 11, 2001. On every mission

he carries three good-luck charms. One is a gift from his parents, a crucifix inscribed with the letters K.O.S.S.—Keep Our Son Safe. The others, a black rubber wrist bracelet and a single dog tag pressed with his nickname, Deucez, and those of two buddies, Skyzap and Spyder. It is only his first tour in Iraq—some of his colleagues have done three—but Mitchell has become a character in the superstition surrounding the unit's endless days. He is called a "mission magnet": Whenever he's on duty, something happens. Tonight the proof piles up.

It is near midnight when we arrive on the scene, circling while the 8
pilots inspect what's below. Humvee headlights carve out a landing zone on an empty road. Soldiers aim their weapons into the blackness beyond, watching for an ambush. We bump down in a cloud of hot dust. The injured man has been laid on a litter and stripped to the waist. Four or five of his comrades run the litter to the helicopter and clumsily, frantically, shove him inside. He has no pulse. Mitchell begins CPR. The helo lifts off for Baghdad.

litter
a vehicle for carrying the sick or wounded; cloth suspended between parallel bars

The soldier is perhaps 20. He is lanky, with knobby shoulders—a boy's 9
shoulders. Green cabin lights wash across his chest, his right arm flops off the litter. Mitchell moves like a piston above him. "Come on, buddy," he says. "COME ON, BUDDY." Sweat pours off him in long beads. Even with the windows open, the helo racing 200 feet above the ground, it is well over a hundred degrees. The heat, the weight of his body armor, and the frantic pace drain him. He's exhausted, losing effectiveness. After ten minutes, crew chief Erik Burns makes Mitchell get out of the way. Then Burns waves me in, a fresh set of arms.

Medics must use any resource available to them, and tonight I am one. I 10
shove down 15 compressions. The soldier's chest feels ready to crack. I sink all my weight into it, right over his heart, his ribs buckling beneath my hands. My head pounds. Mitchell slumps beside me. We're gonna save this kid, I think. I will it true. We fly on toward Baghdad, over the flat fields, the pinprick lights, the sleeping country. The last minutes to the hospital blur past, a manic, sweat-soaked dream.

We touch down on a landing pad outside Ibn Sina Hospital in Baghdad. 11
A nurse and medic duck across the pad, their scrubs flapping in the rotor wash. They haul the soldier into the trauma room. Doctors and nurses swarm him. Someone continues CPR, others slide tubes down his throat, measure blood oxygen levels, check his pupils with a flashilight. Mitchell stands nearby, helmet tucked under his arm, downloading what he knows to a nurse. His bald head shines with sweat. Monitors beep, there is the gasp of breathing machines, the tear of bandages.

"I got blood coming out his ears!" a doctor is saying. 12

"Hey! I got a pulse!" another shouts. It's been five minutes since we 13
arrived.

Mitchell grits his teeth in a tight smile and pumps his fist. *Yes*. 14

"I told you," he says, bouncing on his feet. "No one dies in my helicopter." 15

Then the mood shifts. Something is suddenly understood, it appears on 16
the faces of the doctors. There is a pulse, nothing more. The soldier doesn't react to stimuli, shows no signs of life. There is a question about what to do.

stimuli
something that incites to action

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But Mitchell must leave, speed dictates, and we fly back to base to wait for the next call.

17 On the ground we learn the soldier's fate. Doctors discovered a metal fragment embedded deep in his brain. They decided an operation would be futile. The only hospital equipped to do that kind of brain surgery was too far away, in another part of Iraq. They pumped in pain meds, just in case, and waited for his heart to stop. For Mitchell, the flare of triumph dies. He looks at me blankly, then walks away, saying nothing. It doesn't always end like this. But these are the days the crews must get used to, the ones they never forget.

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. How does the introduction orient readers and ease them into the story?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: Where is dialogue or revealed thought used well? Why do you think so?
3. Why does the author tell readers so much about Mitchell? What is his significance in the article?
4. What elements in the article create the most suspense?
5. Name three specific details that help you feel like a part of the narrative.
6. What insights do you think the author wants his readers to gain from this article?
7. Read, watch videos of, and/or listen to two first-person accounts of soldiers' experiences in Iraq on Washingtonpost.com's special report "In Their Own Words" at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/custom/2006/03/17/CU2006031701349.html. Apply questions 5 and 6 above to each personal narrative.





For a detailed discussion of illustration, see Chapter 23.

Illustration

English Is a Crazy Language BY RICHARD LEDERER

Illustration uses detailed examples to help explain a point. In this essay by Richard Lederer, "English Is a Crazy Language" (from the book *Crazy English*), notice how many examples the author gives to support his point about the unpredictable nature of word forms in English. Does the author explain his examples clearly enough for you to understand them? Does the humor make the essay more readable for you?



1 English is the most widely spoken language in the history of our planet, used in some way by at least one out of every seven human beings around the globe. Half of the world's books are written in English, and the majority of international telephone calls are made in English. English is the language of over sixty percent of the world's radio programs, many of them beamed, ironically, by the Russians, who know that to win friends and influence nations, they're best off using English. More than seventy percent of international mail

is written and addressed in English, and eighty percent of all computer text is stored in English. English has acquired the largest vocabulary of all the world's languages, perhaps as many as two million words, and has generated one of the noblest bodies of literature in the annals of the human race.

annals
descriptive accounts or records

Nonetheless, it is now time to face the fact that English is a crazy language. 2

In the crazy English language, the blackbird hen is brown, blackboards can be blue or green, and blackberries are green and then red before they are ripe. Even if blackberries were really black and blueberries really blue, what are strawberries, cranberries, elderberries, huckleberries, raspberries, boysenberries, mulberries, and gooseberries supposed to look like? 3

To add to the insanity, there is no butter in buttermilk, no egg in eggplant, no grape in grapefruit, neither worms nor wood in wormwood, neither pine nor apple in pineapple, neither peas nor nuts in peanuts, and no ham in a hamburger. (In fact, if somebody invented a sandwich consisting of a ham patty in a bun, we would have a hard time finding a name for it.) To make matters worse, English muffins weren't invented in England, French fries in France, or danish pastries in Denmark. And we discover even more culinary madness in the revelations that sweetmeat is candy, while sweetbread, which isn't sweet, is made from meat. 4

In this unreliable English tongue, greyhounds aren't always grey (or gray); panda bears and koala bears aren't bears (they're marsupials); a woodchuck is a groundhog, which is not a hog; a horned toad is a lizard; glowworms are fireflies, but fireflies are not flies (they're beetles); ladybugs and lightning bugs are also beetles (and to propagate, a significant proportion of ladybugs must be male); a guinea pig is neither a pig nor from Guinea (it's a South American rodent); and a titmouse is neither mammal nor mammaried. 5

mammaried
having mammary (milk-producing) glands

Language is like the air we breathe. It's invisible, inescapable, indispensable, and we take it for granted. But when we take the time, step back, and listen to the sounds that escape from the holes in people's faces and explore the paradoxes and vagaries of English, we find that hot dogs can be cold, darkrooms can be lit, homework can be done in school, nightmares can take place in broad daylight, while morning sickness and day-dreaming can take place at night, tomboys are girls, midwives can be men, hours—especially happy hours and rush hours—can last longer than sixty minutes, quicksand works *very* slowly, boxing rings are square, silverware can be made of plastic and tablecloths of paper, most telephones are dialed by being punched (or pushed?), and most bathrooms don't have any baths in them. In fact, a dog can go to the bathroom under a tree—no bath, no room; it's still going to the bathroom. And doesn't it seem at least a little bizarre that we go to the bathroom in order to go to the bathroom? 6

paradox
an apparent contradiction

vagary
unpredictable notion

Why is it that a woman can man a station but a man can't woman one, that a man can father a movement but a woman can't mother one, and that a king rules a kingdom but a queen doesn't rule a queendom? How did all those Renaissance men reproduce when there don't seem to have been any Renaissance women? 7

A writer is someone who writes, and a stinger is something that stings. But fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce, hammers don't ham, and humdingers 8

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don't humding. If the plural of *tooth* is *teeth*, shouldn't the plural of *booth* be *beeth*? One goose, two geese—so one moose, two meese? One index, two indices—one Kleenex, two Kleenices? If people ring a bell today and rang a bell yesterday, why don't we say that they flang a ball? If they wrote a letter, perhaps they also bote their tongue. If the teacher taught, why isn't it also true that the preacher praught? Why is it that the sun shone yesterday while I shined my shoes, that I treaded water and then trod on soil, and that I flew out to see a World Series game in which my favorite player flied out?

9 If we conceive a conception and receive at a reception, why don't we grieve a greption and believe a beleption? If a horsehair mat is made from the hair of horses and a camel's hair brush from the hair of camels, from what is a mohair coat made? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? If a fire-fighter fights fire, what does a freedom fighter fight? If a weight-lifter lifts weights, what does a shoplifter lift? If *pro* and *con* are opposites, is congress the opposite of progress?

10 Sometimes you have to believe that all English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what other language do people drive in a parkway and park in a driveway? In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? In what other language do privates eat in the general mess and generals eat in the private mess? In what other language do men get hernias and women get hysterectomies? In what other language do people ship by truck and send cargo by ship? In what other language can your nose run and your feet smell?

11 How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, "what's going on?" and "what's coming off?" be the same, and a bad licking and a good licking be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? How can sharp speech and blunt speech be the same and *quite a lot* and *quite a few* the same, while *overlook* and *oversee* are opposites? How can the weather be hot as hell one day and cold as hell the next?

12 If *button* and *unbutton* and *tie* and *untie* are opposites, why are *loosen* and *unloosen* and *ravel* and *unravel* the same? If *bad* is the opposite of *good*, *hard* the opposite of *soft*, and *up* the opposite of *down*, why are *badly* and *goodly*, *hardly* and *softly*, and *upright* and *downright* not opposing pairs? If harmless actions are the opposite of harmful actions, why are shameless and shameful behavior the same and pricey objects less expensive than priceless ones? If appropriate and inappropriate remarks and passable and impassable mountain trails are opposites, why are flammable and inflammable materials, heritable and inheritable property, and passive and impassive people the same and valuable objects less treasured than invaluable ones? If *uplift* is the same as *lift up*, why are *upset* and *set up* opposite in meaning? Why are *pertinent* and *impertinent*, *canny* and *uncanny*, and *famous* and *infamous* neither opposites nor the same? How can *raise* and *raze* and *reckless* and *wreckless* be opposites when each pair contains the same sound?

13 Why is it that when the sun or the moon or the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible, and that when I wind up my watch, I start it, but when I wind up this essay, I shall end it?

14 English is a crazy language.

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. Why does the author begin the essay with facts about English usage and its distribution?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: How often does the author compare or contrast? Why does the author ask questions so often?
3. Comment on the conclusion: Does one sentence seem sufficient? Can you suggest any other point the author might have made at the end of this essay?
4. Locate the topic sentences in paragraphs 4–6. How well do they express the author's main point in each paragraph?
5. Choose any one of the author's examples and add to it with an example of your own. For instance, in paragraph 8 the author lists *goose/geese* and then *moose/meese*. What other similar examples can you come up with?
6. What is the author's main purpose in writing the essay? What makes you think this?
7. Listen to Richard Lederer on any episode of Language Pet Peeves at http://www.npr.org/programs/watc/lpp/lppindex.html. Note (1) a main point (or particular pet peeve) discussed in the episode and (2) at least two specific examples of it.



What Really Scares Us?

BY DAVID ROPEIK

In the next essay, "What Really Scares Us?" (originally published in *Parade* magazine), David Ropeik explores people's most common fears, explaining some of their main causes. As you read, notice the common examples the author uses to clarify his points. How many of the eight emotional factors Ropeik lists apply to you?



eradicated
destroyed completely

The list of things to be afraid of seems to grow daily: Terrorism. Snipers. Child 1
abductions. West Nile virus. According to a number of public-opinion surveys, many people think it's more dangerous to be living now than it ever has been.

But those fears fly in the face of evidence that, in many ways, things are better 2
than they've ever been. The average American life expectancy in 1900 was about 47 years. Now it's nearing 80. Diseases that plagued us—polio, smallpox, tuberculosis—have been all but eradicated in the U.S. In 1960, out of every 1000 babies born, 26 did not survive their first year. That number is now down to seven.

So why this disconnect between the facts and our fears? Well, it turns out 3
that when it comes to the perception of risks, facts are only part of how we decide what to be afraid of and how afraid to be. Another huge factor—sometimes the most important factor—is our emotions.

Why do humans perceive risks this way if our highly advanced brain gives 4
us the power to reason? It's because our brains are biologically built to fear first and think second. Which, in the end, is a pretty good strategy for survival.

5 Say you're walking through the woods and see a line on the ground, and you're not sure if it's a snake or a stick. The visual information goes to two parts of the brain. One is called the prefrontal cortex, behind your forehead. That's the area where we do a lot of our reasoning and thinking. The other area is called the amygdala, which is the brain's key emotion center.

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6 Because of the way the brain is constructed, the information gets to the amygdala before it gets to the prefrontal cortex. So, before the reasoning part of the brain has had a chance to consider the facts, the fear center is saying, "Jump back, you dummy! It *could* be a snake!"

7 But how does the brain turn raw sensory information into fear? Apparently our brains have built-in patterns for interpreting sensory information that help us subconsciously filter incoming messages, making us more afraid of some things than others. Psychologists have identified many of the specific emotional characteristics of risks that are likely to make us more, or less, afraid.

subconsciously beneath or beyond thoughts the mind is aware of

EMOTIONAL FACTORS THAT DETERMINE OUR FEARS

8 **Control.** Imagine that you're driving down the highway, feeling pretty safe because you're behind the wheel. Now switch seats with your passenger. You're probably a little more nervous, maybe even turning into a full-fledged backseat driver. Not because the risk has gone up—the annual odds of being killed in a motor vehicle crash are 1 in 6700—but because you no longer are in control.

9 **Trust.** We trust certain sources more than others. We're less afraid when a trusted doctor or scientist, such as the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, explains anthrax than when a politician explains it.

10 **Newness.** When a risk first shows up, we treat it more like a snake until we've lived with it for a while and our experience lets us put the risk in perspective. We are more afraid of West Nile virus when it first shows up in our area than after it has been around for a few years. (Odds of dying from West Nile virus: 1 in 1,000,000.)

11 **Choice.** We're more afraid of risks that are imposed on us than risks we take by choice. Imagine that you're driving along, talking on your cell phone. In the next lane, some other guy is driving and using *his* cell phone. Though both of you are in danger, the risk from the motorist next to you feels greater, because it's being imposed on you.

12 **Dread.** Things that can kill us in really awful ways seem riskier. We're more afraid of being eaten alive by a shark (odds, 1 in 281,000,000) or dying in a plane crash (1 in 9,000,000) than of dying from heart disease (1 in 300).

13 **Me or Them.** If the risk is to you, it's worse than if that same risk only threatens somebody else. We're *all* worried about terrorism, now that we know it can happen here too, to us. A one in a million risk is too high if we think *we* could be that "one."

14 **Is it hard to understand?** The more complicated a risk is, the less we can understand it—and the more we treat it like a snake, just to be safe. For example, we're concerned about ionizing (nuclear) radiation, but we're not worried about infrared radiation, which we know simply as heat.

ionizing separating, changing into ions

15 **Natural or manmade?** If it's natural, we're less afraid than if it's manmade. We're more frightened of nuclear power accidents (odds, 1 in 200,000) than of solar radiation. Yet sun exposure causes an estimated 1.3 million new cases of skin cancer in America per year, 7800 of which are fatal.

16 Several of these factors are often at work on the same risk at the same time, some making us more afraid and some less. The effect of these factors changes over time. Also, individual fears vary based on individual circum-

stances. For instance, women fear breast cancer more than men, while men fear prostate cancer more than women.

While it's understandable that we perceive risks this way, it also can be dangerous. Some people, afraid to fly because they lack control or because the risk of terrorism is new and feels high, choose instead to drive—a much bigger risk. It may make them *feel* safer, but overreacting this way raises their risks. 17

Underreacting can be dangerous too. People who aren't concerned about the risk of the sun—because it's natural and because of that nice glowing tan—raise their cancer risk by not taking the danger of sun exposure seriously enough to slap on sunscreen or wear a hat. 18

In the end, the best way to reduce the danger of any given risk is to arm yourself with some basic facts from a reliable, neutral source, so the rational side of your perceptions can hold its own in the contest against your natural emotions. The better you can do at keeping your perception of risks closer in line with what the risks actually are, the happier *and* safer you'll be. 19

Facts Can Help You Feel Safer

Here are your chances of dying in a given year due to . . .

Child Kidnapping 1 in 1,300,000
Dog Bite 1 in 19,000,000
Cell Phone Radiation 0
Flood 1 in 6,900,000
Flu 1 in 130,000
Lightning 1 in 3,000,000
Guns 1 in 28,000
Snake/Lizard/Spider 1 in 56,000,000

(Figures provided by David Ropeik based on data from private and U.S. government agencies. Odds are for the average American. Individual risk may vary.)

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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. Where does the author locate his thesis sentence?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: What patterns of development are used in paragraphs 5 and 6 and 17 and 18? Are they used effectively? Why or why not?
3. What are the eight main factors that control people's fear?





4. How well does the example in paragraph 11 help explain the author's point?
5. How does the chart in the middle of this essay relate to the author's thesis? Explain why it is an effective or ineffective example.
6. Comment on the conclusion: lead, summary, and expanded thought. Can you suggest any other point the author might have made at the end of this essay?
7. With a partner or in groups, choose one emotional fear factor and discuss specific examples of each of your own fears—former or current. Compile all group members' examples. For inspiration, consult this extensive list of fears: http://phobialist.com/.

HINT

For a detailed discussion of causes and effects, see Chapter 24.

Cause and Effect

Insight: Overfishing Is Creating a Jellyfish Plague"

BY DEBORA MACKENZIE

Conservation in Context

The cause-and-effect pattern of development tries to determine what makes events happen and what results from those events. In this article from the online edition of the British magazine *New Scientist*, Debora Mackenzie discusses several causes for the explosive increase in jellyfish populations in the planet's oceans. When analyzing causes and effects, careful writers try to look past the first or most obvious causes and effects. They often find a chain or pattern developing, one cause or effect leading to the next and then the next. Notice the "vicious circle" that Mackenzie comments on in her final paragraph.

1 Global warming is starting to sting—literally. Last week millions of baby mauve stinger jellyfish, in a swarm 26 square kilometers in area and 10 meters deep, drifted into a salmon farm in the Irish Sea, killing all 100,000 fish.



2 Fish farmers can do almost nothing to defend against such swarms, as small jellyfish—or the tentacles of larger ones, detached but still stinging—are swept by currents into the salmon cages, where the fish die of stress.

3 More swarms have been spotted along British coastlines as far north as Shetland. The mauve stinger, a Mediterranean species, has been increasingly turning up in U.K. waters in recent years, but this autumn's numbers are unprecedented. What's more, this isn't supposed to be the season for babies.

4 It is now. Warmer seawater is boosting mauve stinger numbers in the Mediterranean by increasing winter survival and perhaps lengthening the breeding season. It is also allowing them to move north.

5 Jellyfish in general are doing well out of global warming, not only because of warmer water and favorable winds but also because carbon dioxide has made seawater more acidic, which harms small creatures with acid-soluble shells that compete with jellyfish.

acid-soluble capable of being dissolved in acid

6 Meanwhile overfishing is removing vertebrates that eat jellyfish. The animals also gobble baby fish, preventing stocks from recovering. Fisheries scientists have warned for years that we are replacing an ocean full of fish with

one full of jellyfish—which few creatures eat—meaning this could even affect the global carbon budget.

The more immediate worry is for the 107 million metric tons of fish and shellfish people eat each year. With wild fisheries maxed out, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization warned last week, the additional 37 million metric tons we will need by 2030 to feed the predicted human population will have to come from fish farms, even if existing wild fisheries stay the same. If wild fish stocks decline, that need will increase. 7

It's a vicious circle. Overfishing means we need more fish farms and it also boost's populations of jellyfish, which damage fish farms. As the growing human population needs more food, it exacerbates warming, and inedible jellyfish prosper. The final irony is that small plankton-eating fish, which compete most directly with jellyfish and whose decline aids them most, are also being overfished—largely to make fishmeal, the main food for fish farms. 8

exacerbates
increasing the severity

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. What double meaning (pun) does the author use in her hook? Is the pun effective? Why or why not?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: What causes for the overpopulation of jellyfish do you find in paragraphs 4–6?
3. Write out one causal chain leading to the growth of jellyfish populations.
4. Write an effects chain leading away from that overpopulation (see item 3).
5. What is the author's purpose in using a three-word sentence to begin paragraph 4?
6. What does the author mean by the "final irony" in her conclusion?
7. With group members, list at least three ironies (like the one the author mentions) that you might have heard of or that apply to your personal life. For example, Australians imported rabbits for hunting sport in 1859, but the animals overpopulated, quickly devouring vegetation that the native species needed for survival.



Gilded Age, Gilded Cage

BY LESLIE T. CHANG

In the following excerpt from an article published in *National Geographic*, author Leslie T. Chang takes a close look at some of the problems China faces with its current rapid economic development. Chang focuses on a young girl, Zhou (Bella) Jiaying, and her family, frequently relying on cause and effect to show their difficulties and, by extension, those of millions of other families in China. As you read, think back to your own childhood routines.



At the age of four, Zhou Jiaying was enrolled in two classes—Spoken American English and English Conversation—and given the English name Bella. Her parents hoped she might go abroad for college. The next year they 1

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signed her up for acting class. When she turned eight, she started on the piano, which taught discipline and developed the cerebrum. In the summers she went to the pool for lessons; swimming, her parents said, would make her taller. Bella wanted to be a lawyer, and to be a lawyer you had to be tall.

cerebrum largest part of the brain

2 By the time she was ten, Bella lived a life that was rich with possibility and as regimented as a drill sergeant's. After school she did homework unsupervised until her parents got home. Then came dinner, bath, piano practice. Sometimes she was permitted television, but only the news. On Saturdays she took a private essay class followed by Math Olympics, and on Sundays a piano lesson and a prep class for her entrance exam to a Shanghai middle school. The best moment of the week was Friday afternoon, when school let out early. Bella might take a deep breath and look around, like a man who discovers a glimpse of blue sky from the confines of the prison yard.

3 For China's emerging middle class, this is an age of aspiration—but also a time of anxiety. Opportunities have multiplied, but each one brings pressure to take part and not lose out, and every acquisition seems to come ready-wrapped in disappointment that it isn't something newer and better. An apartment that was renovated a few years ago looks dated; a mobile phone without a video camera and color screen is an embarrassment. Classes in colloquial English are fashionable among Shanghai schoolchildren, but everything costs money.

colloquial informal, conversational

4 Freedom is not always liberating for people who grew up in a stable socialist society; sometimes it feels more like a never ending struggle not to fall behind. A study has shown that 45 percent of Chinese urban residents are at health risk due to stress, with the highest rates among high school students.

5 Fifth grade was Bella's toughest year yet. At its end she would take entrance exams for middle school. Every student knew where he or she ranked: When teachers handed back tests, they had the students stand in groups according to their scores. Bella ranked in the middle—12th or 13th in a class of 25, lower if she lost focus.

6 She hated Japan, as her textbooks had taught her to: The Japanese army had killed 300,000 Chinese in the 1937 Nanjing massacre. She hated America too, because it always meddled in the affairs of other countries. She spoke a fair amount of English: "Men like to smoke and drink beer, wine, and whiskey." Her favorite restaurant was Pizza Hut, and she liked the spicy wings at KFC. Her record on the hula hoop was 2,000 spins.

7 The best place in the world was the Baodaxiang Children's Department Store on Nanjing Road. In its vast stationery department, Bella would carefully select additions to her eraser collection. She owned 30 erasers—stored in a cookie tin at home—that were shaped like flip-flops and hamburgers and cartoon characters; each was not much bigger than a thumbnail, and all remained in their original plastic packaging. When her grandparents took her to the same store, Bella headed for the toy section, but not when she was with her parents. They said she was too old for toys.

clampdown crackdown

8 If Bella scored well on a test, her parents bought her presents; a bad grade brought a clampdown at home. Her best subject was Chinese, where she had

mastered the art of the composition: She could describe a household object in a morally uplifting way.

> *Last winter Grandmother left her spider plant outdoors and forgot about it. . . . This spring it actually lived. Some people say this plant is lowly, but the spider plant does not listen to arbitrary orders, it does not fear hardship, and in the face of adversity it continues to struggle. This spirit is worthy of praise.* 9

She did poorly in math. Extra math tutoring was a constant and would remain so until the college entrance examination, which was seven years away. You were only as good as your worst subject. If you didn't get into one of Shanghai's top middle schools, your fate would be mediocre classmates and teachers who taught only what was in the textbook. Your chances of getting into a good high school, not to mention a good college, would diminish. 10

mediocre
average, middling

You had to keep moving, because staying in place meant falling behind. That was how the world worked even if you were only ten years old. 11

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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and thesis. In what paragraph is the thesis located?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: What causes or effects are mentioned in paragraphs 3–7?
3. What is the simile near the end of paragraph 2, and how is it linked to the essay's point?
4. In paragraph 6 we learn that Bella hates the United States. Why does she feel this way, and do you see any irony in her choice of restaurants and hula hoop toy?
5. How does Bella's composition about the spider plant, in paragraph 9, relate to Chang's main point?
6. In the brief paragraph that concludes this excerpt, how does the author reiterate the main point of the essay?
7. What pressures (causes) do you have or did you have as a child, and how do you think that they have changed your life (effects)? Discuss your thoughts in small groups, focusing on linking specific causes to effects.



Process Description

How to Surf

BY TIM MADDUX



Process instructions are useful ways to communicate specific information that people need to complete some task, from baking a cake to building a house. The following selection is from the Santa Barbara Surfing website; by reading it, you can learn from Tim Maddux how to begin surfing. In this process to *do*, notice that Maddux breaks surfing down into a series of *steps* arranged *chronologically* and divided with subheadings. As you read, you will see that the author often explains *reasons* behind steps and gives *warnings* where special problems or dangers are likely.

1 This is a quick guide for newcomers to the sport/lifestyle/obsession of surfing. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the basic rules of ettiquette for the sport.

YOUR FIRST SURFBOARD

2 There are many different types of surfboards, and for a beginner the features and characteristics can seem confusing. The best surfboard for a beginner is a *funboard* or an *egg*, which is a fairly wide and thick board from 7′ to 8′ in length, typically having a blunt or rounded nose. A good rule of thumb is to get something 14″ longer than you are tall and at least 20″ wide. A *longboard*, a round-nosed board of 9′ or more length, is too difficult to paddle and control for most beginners, while a *shortboard* is typically too thin, narrow, and short, rendering it unstable and difficult to paddle.



For a detailed discussion of process description, see Chapter 25.

3 Look for a used board when first starting out. Most surf shops should have some sort of used board selection. There may also be used-equipment retailers, like Play It Again Sports, in your area. Look in newspapers for boards for sale. Be sure to look any board over before purchasing:

- Make sure there aren't any *dings*, or holes, in the board. If there are, you will need to repair them.
- Test the deck for soft, bubbly *delamination*, which weakens the board and allows it to take on water.
- Make sure the fins are intact and that there is a plug on the deck for a leash.
- Again, look for something wide, thick, and long as opposed to narrow, short, and thin. The board need not be totally pristine; once you really get into surfing, you'll likely want to upgrade to something different.



To take full advantage of the references this article makes to other topics, visit: www.santabarbarasurfing.com.

YOUR FIRST WETSUIT

4 Far and away the single most important thing to look for when purchasing a new wetsuit is how it fits. Shop around as much as you can. Make sure the suit has a comfortable feel. All suits will be tight by design, but yours shouldn't be totally restrictive. Test range of motion by raising your arms overhead and arching your back, then bending and touching your toes. Do some squats. Pay attention to the suit's response. If you're getting pinched by the neoprene or if it is going taut, then you'll need to try a different suit.

neoprene
an oil-resistant synthetic rubber material

5 Women may find it problematic that most wetsuits are cut for men. There are women's suits out there, so ask your shop if they carry any. Don't just order one without getting a chance to try it on. If you're going with a swimsuit, look to get a 1-piece or a pair of ladies' trunks.

6 It's possible to get a good price on a used wetsuit as well. Check to see how intact the seams are, and look in high-wear areas (underarms, hindquarters) for neoprene damage. As neoprene ages, it stiffens and shrinks. Used wetsuits are thus a good idea for the beginner who isn't sure about sticking with the

sport. For more details, see the wetsuit guide, and for some amusement, read Bonzer's story about his first wetsuit.

OTHER ACCESSORIES

Leashes

The leash is a cord of polyurethane that straps around the ankle of a surfer and is attached to the surfboard. Attach it to your back leg. Never tug on the leash when your board is being held under as the board can come snapping back at you. Practice removing the leash quickly in case it gets caught on a rock or pier piling. Treat your surfboard as if it were not attached, doing conservative exits and hanging onto it at all times.

polyurethane
a polymer derived by the addition of many smaller molecules

Wax/Deck Grips

Wax and deck grips help keep your feet on the board once you learn to stand up.

- **Wax.** Wax goes on the deck (top) of the board. It typically comes in two coats: a base coat that goes directly onto the deck in a thin layer and then a sticky coat that beads up to provide traction. Use long, quick strokes of the full board length with subtle, light pressure to get a nice bead. Wax combs can be purchased to rough up wax as it gets worn slick and to strip wax for a fresh coat. There is no need to buy any custom wax remover from a surf shop; just leave the board in the sun for 5 minutes and strip it with a wax comb or any piece of hard, straight plastic.
- **Deck Grips.** These are expensive traction pads that provide some extra grip as well as padding for the deck of the board. They can limit the movement of the feet and can result in discomfort to the chest and stomach while paddling. Tail patches are specifically designed for the rear of the board, and they provide good traction for the rear foot; this is needed in most turns on a shortboard. Tail patches should be centered over the rear fins. For the rest of the board, the deck grip can go anywhere that seems appropriate. Try popping up from a prone position to standing with your legs slightly apart next to the board. Place the grip so your front foot is centered.

WHERE TO SURF

Ask around for good beginner surf breaks when you're shopping for equipment. Most shop proprietors will be happy to assist, especially if you're making a purchase. **Surfing California,** by Bank Wright, is a good resource for any surfer in the state, beginner or otherwise. Swell.com maintains a detailed set of travel and surfmap information online. Check it out for the area where you will be learning. In general, a beginner wants to find a break with waves that look crumbly and slow. Try to find small waves and a sandy beach since you'll be walking around a lot. Don't paddle into a crowded break; you'll likely be a hazard. Don't surf alone. Surf where there are people present but make sure you're not right on top of them or in the way.

proprietors
owners of a business

PRE-SURF PREPARATION

It's a bad idea to just paddle out into the waves without first finding out what conditions are like. In December 1995, a young surfer did just that at Tropics

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in Ventura, paddling out into what he thought was head-high surf when it was twice that size and getting bigger.

13 Take some time to watch the waves and stretch. Focus on your neck, shoulders, triceps, back, and legs. Swing your arms and get your pulse going. Get into a calm state of mind. Watch the waves for at least twice as many minutes as the waves are high on the face in feet. On a waist-high day, that means watching for about 5 or 6 minutes. On a double-overhead day, that means watching for about 20 minutes. Get a feel for where everyone is sitting in the water, where the waves are breaking, and where they're not breaking. Look for rip currents and rocks and hazards. Watch a few larger set waves roll through. Think about where you can paddle out into the surf and where you can swim in if you get into trouble.

14 Put some sunscreen on your face and some wax on your board. Before attaching your leash for the first time, you'll need to figure out which leg is your back leg. Here are some tests:

15 • **The linoleum slide test:** Wear socks and run and slide across the kitchen floor. Which foot is first? Plant it front on your board.

16 • **The push test:** Have someone push you (gently) from behind. Which foot goes forward? That is your front foot.

17 • **The stair test:** Which foot leads on stairs, down? Front foot.

18 • **The bike test:** When you bike and coast, which foot leads on fast downhills on dirt when feet are parallel to ground (well, that's just me on dirt, but you should have pedal cranks parallel to the ground so that feet don't hit rocks, roots, etc.)? Front foot on board.

19 • **The skateboard test:** The best way to figure this out is to try riding a skateboard; your back leg while skateboarding is the same as while surfing.

PADDLING

20 When getting into the water, walk out as far as possible through the waves crumbling into the shoreline.

21 Your paddle stroke should be essentially like a crawl stroke. Center yourself on the board and keep your legs straight behind you, with the board nose level with the water surface. Get a feel for paddling around on the surfboard, and get a sense of its balance.

YOUR FIRST WAVES

22 By now you have found a good place to surf and have gotten used to paddling around without falling off.

whitewater
frothy water, not "real" waves

23 • Grab your board and head out into the water until it's up to your chest. Hopefully you'll still be where the whitewater is rolling in and not outside the breaker line.

24 • Let some whitewater roll by, getting a feel for the rhythm of the waves.

25 • Wait for what looks like a pretty solid chunk of whitewater and turn around, facing the shoreline. Get on your board and start to paddle in.

26 • When the whitewater reaches you, it will surge you forward. Stay in control of the board!

27 • As you feel yourself surge forward, stop paddling and grab the rails of the surfboard with your hands.

- Do a push-up and quickly 'pop' your feet underneath you. Do not kneel; go straight to your feet. Both feet need to be under you at the same time, one in front of the other, with the toes pointing perpendicular to the centerline of the board. 28
- At about this point you'll need to know whether you want to be a regular-foot or a goofy-foot. 29
- Immediately afterwards, let go of the rails and stand in a stable crouch. 30
- It's right about at this point that you will begin to fall. Try not to land on anyone and anything, particularly your board. Fall shallow so you don't hit the bottom. 31
- Hey, you're surfing! Smile, and go do it again. 32

Naturally, most surfers do not surf in the whitewater. They like to turn and do maneuvers on the open face. You'll get out there too once you can stand up in the whitewater reliably. This helps you practice standing up on a fast-moving surfboard without having to worry about where the wave is breaking. You also don't have to think about running into other surfers, pearling, going over the falls, or any other hazards. It's how I learned! 33

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THE RULES OF SURFING

Become familiar with the following rules of line-up behavior before heading outside of the whitewater. These are well-established rules throughtout the world and bring order to what would otherwise be a nightmarish and chaotic sport, with everyone running each other over, lots of dinged-up boards, and many waves going by unridden because everyone is getting thrashed in the soup. 34

- The person up and riding first who is closest to the breaking part of the wave has the right of way. You may hear people declaring their right to a wave by whistling or by shouting "Hey," "I got it," "Coming down," or something similar. 35
- Do not *drop in* on someone who is already riding a wave. "Dropping in" is taking off on a wave in front of someone who is already riding it, in other words, someone who has the right of way. 36
- When paddling back out over or through a wave that someone else is riding, move to go behind him or her. This allows the surfer to continue riding the wave without having to dodge you, and it means that you will be smashed by the whitewater. That's okay, though, because when someone does the same for you, you'll be grateful. 37
- Above all, keep a good attitude. Apologize if you make a mistake. If you are involved in or near a collision, stop what you're doing to make sure that everyone is okay. 38

SURFING REAL WAVES

Now that you've mastered the whitewater foamies and are well-versed in the rules of surfing, you're ready to catch some real waves. 39

The idea is similar to catching the whitewater. Start paddling early as the wave approaches. You should be reaching full speed as the wave comes underneath you and lifts you up. The time to stand is when the board starts to *plane* on the surface of the water. 40

41 Practice, watch others, ask for advice, and check back here for more updates to the page.

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Although the website from which this process description was taken does not include a full-fledged introduction, the thesis is clear. What is it, and where is it located?
2. Where does the author make clear what audience his instructions are intended for?
3. Name the major step groupings or sections into which the process is divided.
4. Comment on the development of the first subsection, "Your First Surfboard." Where does the author define terms? Where does he explain a reason? Where does he give warnings? How clear are these process instructions to you? Why do you feel that way?
5. In the subsection "Other Accessories," which words does the author define, and how clear are his definitions?
6. Under the subsection "Your First Waves," the author assumes that his readers know several terms that they may not. Which terms in this section are unfamiliar to you? Why do you think it is important to define all unfamiliar terms for an audience?
7. Watch the short video "How to Surf a Wave in One Day" at http://www.videojug.com/film/how-to-surf-a-wave-in-one-day, and list the steps in this process. Do you learn more easily by watching someone else demonstrate something or by reading instructions?



Conservation in Context

TEXT BY TIM APPENZELLER

PHOTOS BY FRANS LANTING

Earth in the Beginning

The following essay from *National Geographic* is the lead-in to a photo essay showing what the Earth may have looked like as it developed 4.5 billion years ago (after the Big Bang). This explanation helps readers to *understand* a process rather than to *do* one. As you read, notice that the description is arranged chronologically and that the writer keeps the process interesting by using specific language, active verbs, sentence variety, and the dash—for emphasis.



1 The early Earth was a vision of hell, all scalding rock and choking fumes. Since then, its surface has cooled, continents have drifted, mountains have risen and eroded, and life has emerged, benign and green. Nearly all traces of the planet as it was have been wiped away. But from clues in the oldest rocks, deepest magmas, and even the cratered face of the moon, scientists have traced the planet's beginnings. As those early days have come into focus, so have the rare scenes, found today in some of Earth's harshest places, that recall its ancient self.

2 Its birth pangs began some 4.6 billion years ago as rock and ice particles swirling around the young sun collided and merged, snowballing to produce ever larger planetary building blocks. In violent pileups, they smashed together

to create planets, including the infant Earth. In the turmoil, another body, as big as Mars, struck our planet with the energy of trillions of atomic bombs, enough to melt it all the way through. Most of the impactor was swallowed up in the bottomless magma ocean it created. But the collision also flung a small world's worth of vaporized rock into orbit. Debris quickly gathered itself into a ball, and since then Earth history has unfolded beneath the blank stare of the moon.

After the moon's fiery birth, the Earth's surface cooled. Even so, our planet remained an alien world for the next 700 million years; scientists call this tme the Hadean, after the Greek underworld. Rafts of solid rock drifted in the magma like dark ice floes. Gases hissed from the cooling rock—carbon dioxide, nitrogen, water vapor, and others—enveloping the planet in a scalding atmosphere devoid of oxygen. As the temperature dropped further, the steam condensed into rain that fell in primordial monsoons and filled the ocean basins. 3

These first oceans may have been short-lived. Space rubble left over from the birth of the planets—chunks of rock tens to hundreds of miles across—bombarded Earth throughout the Hadean. The greatest impacts might have boiled the oceans away, forcing the process of cooling and condensation to begin again. 4

By 3.8 billion years ago the impacts relented. Liquid water could persist. About that time, perhaps in the oceans, lifeless chemical reactions crossed a threshold, producing molecules complex enough to reproduce themselves and evolve toward greater complexity. Life was on a road that led, as early as 3.5 billion years ago, to single-celled, blue-green cyanobacteria that flourished in the sunlit parts of the oceans. By the trillions, these microscopic organisms transformed the planet. They captured the energy of the sun to make food, releasing oxygen as a waste product. Little by little they turned the atmosphere into breathable air, opening the way to the diversity of life that followed. 5

Those days are long gone, but the processes that turned our planet from a hell to a habitable world are still on view today, as the images on these pages show. Primordial heat left over from the planet's formation still bursts out in volcanic eruptions, spilling lava that exudes gases like the young, cooling Earth. In the planet's harshest environments today, cyanobacteria reign as they have for billions of years. And each time a plant gains a toehold on newly cooled lava, the victory of life over lifeless rock—won so long ago on the young Earth—is affirmed again. 6

benign
harmless, kind

magma
volcanic rock

Hadean
the Greek underworld was said to be ruled by the god Hades

devoid
lacking

primordial
original, constituting a beginning

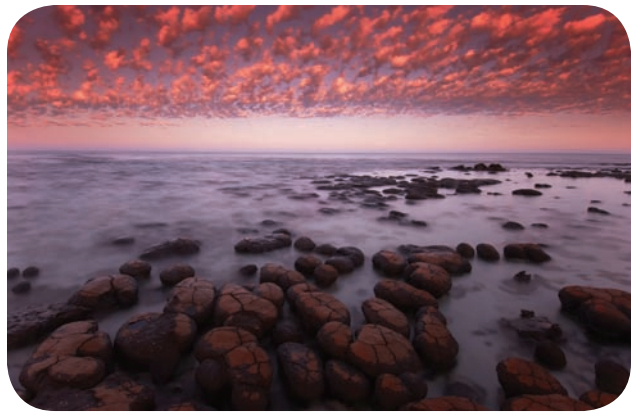
cyanobacteria
microscopic organisms





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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and thesis. Where is the thesis located?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: What major steps does the author name?
3. In what paragraph does the author describe the birth of the moon? How does it happen?
4. What is the purpose in paragraph 3 of the phrase "After the moon's fiery birth"?
5. From paragraph 3, describe how the first oceans came into being.
6. Comment on the conclusion: lead, summary, and expanded thought. How does this brief process description work with the photographs that accompany it?
7. How do the photographs illustrate or describe the process? Using the smallest amount of text possible, summarize the process as a series of captions for each image.
8. View the online video that accompanies this article: http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0612/feature2/multimedia.html. Is it more of a process analysis, a description, or a narration (story)?



Comparison and Contrast

Patriotism or Nationalism?

BY JOSEPH SOBRAN



Essays often use both comparison and contrast to make points about a topic. However, the following essay, "Patriotism or Nationalism," is largely one of contrast. The author, Joseph Sobran, wrote this column in the aftermath of 9/11 to explain what he feels are the fundamental differences between two kinds of people and two kinds of attitudes toward the United States. As you read, notice that Sobran uses point-by-point organization, touching on many points in brief paragraphs (newspaper style) that include both sides of the topic: patriots and nationalists.

After completing his B.A. in English and graduate work, Joseph Sobran taught English on a fellowship and lectured on Shakespeare. Shortly thereafter, Sobran was hired at the *National Review*, where he was a senior editor for eighteen years. Sobran has been a syndicated columnist for nearly thirty years and is the author of *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time* (The Free Press, 1997) and two collections of his columns. His work can be found at www.fgf.Books.com and sobran.com.

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1 This is a season of patriotism, but also of something that is easily mistaken for patriotism; namely, nationalism. The difference is vital.

2 G.K. Chesterton once observed that Rudyard Kipling, the great poet of British imperialism, suffered from a "lack of patriotism." He explained: "He admires England, but he does not love her; for we admire things with reasons, but love them without reasons. He admires England because she is strong, not because she is English."

3 In the same way, many Americans admire America for being strong, not for being American. For them America has to be "the greatest country on earth" in order to be worthy of their devotion. If it were only the 2nd-greatest, or the 19th-greatest, or, heaven forbid, "a 3rd-rate power," it would be virtually worthless.

4 This is nationalism, not patriotism. Patriotism is like family love. You love your family just for being your family, not for being "the greatest family on earth" (whatever that might mean) or for being "better" than other families. You don't feel threatened when other people love their families the same way. On the contrary, you respect their love, and you take comfort in knowing they respect yours. You don't feel your family is enhanced by feuding with other families.

5 While patriotism is a form of affection, nationalism, it has often been said, is grounded in resentment and rivalry; it's often defined by its enemies and traitors, real or supposed. It is militant by nature, and its typical style is belligerent. Patriotism, by contrast, is peaceful until forced to fight.

6 The patriot differs from the nationalist in this respect too: he can laugh at his country, the way members of a family can laugh at each other's foibles. Affection takes for granted the imperfection of those it loves; the patriotic Irishman thinks Ireland is hilarious, whereas the Irish nationalist sees nothing to laugh about.

7 The nationalist has to prove his country is always right. He reduces his country to an idea, a perfect abstraction, rater than a mere home. He may even find the patriot's irreverent humor annoying.



For detailed coverage of comparison and contrast, see Chapter 26.

feuding
fighting, often over an extended grudge

irreverent
lacking in respect

8 Patriotism is relaxed. Nationalism is rigid. The patriot may loyally defend his country even when he knows it's wrong; the nationalist has to insist that he defends his country not because it's his, but because it's right. As if he would have defended it even if he hadn't been born to it! The nationalist talks as if he just "happens," by sheer accident, to have been a native of the greatest country on earth—in contrast to, say, the pitiful Belgian or Brazilian.

9 Because the patriot and the nationalist often use the same words, they may not realize that they use those words in very different senses. The American patriot assumes that the nationalist loves this country with an affection like his own, failing to perceive that what the nationalist really loves is an abstraction—"national greatness," or something like that. The American nationalist, on the other hand, is apt to be suspicious of the patriot, accusing him of insufficient zeal, or even "anti-Americanism."

zeal
enthusiasm

10 When it comes to war, the patriot realizes that the rest of the world can't be turned into America, because his America is something specific and particular—the memories and traditions that can no more be transplanted than the mountains and the prairies. He seeks only contentment at home, and he is quick to compromise with an enemy. He wants his country to be just strong enough to defend itself.

Wilsonian
advocating anti-isolationism and the spread of democracy (from President Woodrow Wilson)

11 But the nationalist, who identifies America with abstractions like *freedom* and *democracy*, may think it's precisely America's mission to spread those abstractions around the world—to impose them by force, if necessary. In his mind, those abstractions are universal ideals, and they can never be truly "safe" until they exist, unchallenged, everywhere; the world must be made "safe for democracy" by "a war to end all wars." We still hear versions of these Wilsonian themes. Any country that refuses to Americanize is "anti-American"—or a "rogue nation." For the nationalist, war is a welcome opportunity to change the world. This is a recipe for endless war.

succumb
surrender, give in to

12 In a time of war hysteria, the outraged patriot, feeling his country under attack, may succumb to the seductions of nationalism. This is the danger we face now.

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook and thesis. Where is the thesis located?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: Where does the author define "nationalism" and "patriotism"?
3. What distinctions does the author draw between patriots and nationalists in paragraph 5?
4. Comment on one specific example that helps you understand some point of contrast of the author's.
5. What is the author's purpose in writing two short sentences to begin paragraph 8?
6. Discuss paragraphs 9 and 10 and the role that the author says nationalists and patriots expect their country to play in world affairs. Do you agree with the author's assessment? Why or why not?
7. Discuss the following questions in small groups: Do you agree with Sobran's definitions? How do you define one or both of these terms? Do you consider yourself a patriot, a nationalist, both, or neither?



Spider-Man 2 Movie Review: Raimi Snares Us in His Web Once More

BY REBECCA MURRAY

The film review that follows is another example of point-by-point arrangement, with Rebecca Murray comparing but mostly contrasting the first two Spider-Man movies. After you have read her review, which film would you say she favors? Why do you think so? Is mentioning good points about the less-favored subject of a comparison or contrast an effective strategy? Why or why not?



Is *Spider Man 2* the best movie ever made based on a comic book, as some 1
early reviews have proclaimed? I don't know. That's a pretty grand statement and one I don't feel qualified to assess, being a non–comic book type of person. I do know the original *Spider-Man* was incredibly fun, a genuine rollercoaster ride of a movie that set the bar tremendously high, much too high for most movies of this subgenre to live up to. I believe this sequel is a better *film*, though I didn't find myself feeling as exhilarated during it as I did while watching the original. But that's not to say this one has a been-there, done-that quality to it. It doesn't. This sequel stands on its own and in no way feels like recycled material. And judged on its own, I feel safe in declaring it's one of the best movies we'll see in theaters this year.

subgenre
smaller category within a larger one

Spider-Man 2 is darker, more emotionally intense, and features a more 2
serious storyline than the first movie. While the first film had to spend a good portion of its running time introducing the characters and expaining how *Spider-Man* came to be, this second film of the series doesn't carry that burden. We know Peter Parker (Tobey Maguire) was bitten by a radioactive spider, we know Peter loves MJ (Kirsten Dunst) but will not allow himself to be with her, and we know Peter's best friend, Harry (James Franco) is out to kill Spider-Man because he believes the webslinger murdered his father. All of this was laid out for us by the end of the first *Spider-Man* movie.

In the second film, we're allowed more of an opportunity to get to know 3
Peter as a person. We feel his torment as he tries to hide his emotions from MJ. We care about him as he's pulled between doing the responsible thing as Spider-Man and living a normal life free from the pressure of being a hero. *Spider-Man 2* lets us look further into the psyche of the boy/man who wears the blue and red suit. And while we're taken on this emotional journey with Peter, we're also treated to more time with the central figures of the first *Spider-Man* movie and to a few new characters from the world of the *Spider-Man* comic books, foremost of which is this film's villain, Dr. Otto Octavius (Doc Ock for short). This ultra-cool bad guy is the star of the show when it comes to effects—and acting. Very few movie villains can rival Alfred Molina in character as the man with tentacles (special kudos to Raimi for making sure Doc Ock was played by such a first-rate actor). Doc Ock could have been a campy character, but with Molina in charge, he remains a man tormented by the evil he's unleashed and overwhelmed by tragic circumstances, rather than a two-dimensional antagonist of the film's hero.

psyche
a person's psychological structure, what motivates him or her

kudos
congratulations, honor

campy
overacted, deliberately artificial

Spider-Man 2 has a gentler sense of humor, quirky like the original, yet 4
quieter. Sam Raimi throws in a few recognizable faces in cameo roles who

cameo
brief appearance

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generate a fair share of laughs, and even inserts a scene in which Maguire as Spider-Man injures his back (a nod at Maguire's real-life back problems, which almost kept him out of this sequel). One of my personal favorite scenes featured Hal Sparks in an elevator with the in-costume Spider-Man. Classic.

5 We got used to watching Spider-Man fly between buildings and leap from incredible heights in the first movie. The effects which worked so well in *Spider-Man* have been tweaked to such a degree in *Spider-Man 2* it's nearly impossible to distinguish pure computer-generated graphics from scenes involving actors or stuntmen in front of blue screens. Because all of the effects—from speeding trains to giant fiery orbs—are simply incredible, there's nothing that jolts you out of the movie, no point in the film where you are jarred from believing your eyes. As far as effects-heavy movies go, *Spider-Man 2* is at the head of the pack.

6 Comparing the two *Spider-Man* movies is like comparing apples and oranges. They are totally different creations. One's an exuberant burst of energy contained on film and the other's a toned down, coming-of-age tale set in the world of superheroes and monstrous villains. Though both movies relied heavily on the CGI effects, Raimi did a terrific job in both films of never forgetting the audience needs to connect with the flesh and blood actors. The reason *Spider-Man* and *Spider-Man 2* work is that both keep that focus in the forefront, with the special effects filling in around the actors and not overwhelming them.

CGI
computer-generated

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and focus. Where is the thesis located?
2. In this comparison-and-contrast film review, locate the topic sentence for each body paragraph, and then list the main points of contrast between *Spider-Man* and *Spider-Man 2*.
3. List the connecting word or phrase used between each paragraph. Would you rate the paragraphs in this essay as smoothly connected? Why or why not?
4. Comment on one specific example that helps you understand some point of contrast of the author's.
5. Discuss the concluding paragraph. Do you agree with the author's assessment, that *Spider-Man* and *Spider-Man 2* are totally different creations, or has she perhaps overstated her case? Why or why not?
6. If you were comparing and contrasting these two films, what other points would you mention—and why?
7. In a paragraph, compare or contrast the trailers for any two Spider-Man movies; as you note similarities or differences, be sure to make a specific point.
   - *Spider-Man:* http://spiderman.sonypictures.com/movies/spiderman/video/
   - *Spider-Man 2:* http://spiderman.sonypictures.com/movies/spiderman2/video/
   - *Spider-Man 3:* http://spiderman.sonypictures.com/movies/spiderman3/video/



Classification

Doublespeak

BY WILLIAM LUTZ



Dividing and classifying things, people, and ideas is an important organizational strategy. It allows writers to break down more complex issues to better understand the pieces and so to better communicate that knowledge to others. In the next selection, from the book *Doublespeak*, by William Lutz, the author tackles a serious distortion of language committed by many who know perfectly well what they are doing. The manipulation of others through language that shifts or hides meaning—or that simply lies—is this writer's subject. As in all classifying, a single organizing principle (SOP) is used; in this case Lutz classifies language by its degree of deception.



For detailed coverage of classification, see Chapter 27.

There are no potholes in the streets of Tucson, Arizona, just "pavement deficiencies." The Reagan Administration didn't propose any new taxes, just "revenue enhancement" through new "user's fees." Those aren't bums on the street, just "non-goal oriented members of society." There are no more poor people, just "fiscal underachievers." There was no robbery of an automatic teller machine, just an "unauthorized withdrawal." The patient didn't die because of medical malpractice, it was just a "diagnostic misadventure of a high magnitude." The U.S. Army doesn't kill the enemy anymore, it just "services the target." And the doublespeak goes on. 1

Doublespeak is language that pretends to communicate but really doesn't. It is language that makes the bad seem good, the negative appear positive, the unpleasant appear attractive or at least tolerable. Doublespeak is language that avoids or shifts responsibility, language that is at variance with its real or purported meaning. It is language that conceals or prevents thought; rather than extending thought, doublespeak limits it. . . . 2

HOW TO SPOT DOUBLESPEAK

How can you spot doublespeak? Most of the time you will recognize doublespeak when you see or hear it. But, if you have any doubts, you can identify doublespeak just by answering these questions: Who is saying what to whom, under what conditions and circumstances, with what intent, and with what results? Answering these questions will usually help you identify as doublespeak language that appears to be legitimate or that at first glance doesn't even appear to be doublespeak. 3

First Kind of Doublespeak

There are at least four kinds of doublespeak. The first is the euphemism, an inoffensive or positive word or phrase used to avoid a harsh, unpleasant, or distasteful reality. But a euphemism can also be a tactful word or phrase which avoids directly mentioning a painful reality, or it can be an expression used out of concern for the feelings of someone else, or to avoid directly discussing a topic subject to a social or cultural taboo. 4

When you use a euphemism because of your sensitivity for someone's feelings or out of concern for a recognized social or cultural taboo, it is not doublespeak. For example, you express your condolences that someone has "passed away" because you do not want to say to a grieving person, "I'm sorry your father is dead." When you use the euphemism "passed away," no one is misled. Moreover, the euphemism functions here not just to protect the feelings 5

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of another person, but to communicate also your concern for that person's feelings during a period of mourning. When you excuse yourself to go to the "restroom," or you mention that someone is "sleepin with" or "involved with" someone else, you do not mislead anyone about your meaning, but you do respect the social taboos about discussing bodily functions and sex in direct terms. You also indicate your sensitivity to the feelings of your audience, which is usually considered a mark of courtesy and good manners.

6 However, when a euphemism is used to mislead or deceive, it becomes doublespeak. For example, in 1984 the U.S. State Department announced that it would no longer use the word "killing" in its annual report on the status of human rights in countries around the world. Instead, it would use the phrase "unlawful or arbitrary deprivation of life," which the department claimed was more accurate. Its real purpose for using this phrase was simply to avoid discussing the embarrassing situation of government-sanctioned killings in countries that are supported by the United States and have been certified by the United States as respecting the human rights of their citizens. This use of a euphemism constitutes doublespeak, since it is designed to mislead, to cover up the unpleasant. Its real intent is at variance with its apparent intent. It is language designed to alter our perception of reality.

sanctioned
approved of or even supported

7 The Pentagon, too, avoids discussing unpleasant realities when it refers to bombs and artillery shells that fall on civilian targets as "incontinent ordnance." And in 1977 the Pentagon tried to slip funding for the neutron bomb unnoticed into an appropriations bill by calling it a "radiation enhancement device."

Second Kind of Doublespeak

8 A second kind of doublespeak is jargon, the specialized language of a trade, profession, or similar group, such as that used by doctors, lawyers, engineers, educators, or car mechanics. Jargon can serve an important and useful function. Within a group, jargon functions as a kind of verbal shorthand that allows members of the group to communicate with each other clearly, efficiently, and quickly. Indeed, it is a mark of membership in the group to be able to use and understand the group's jargon.

9 But jargon, like the euphemism, can also be doublespeak. It can be—and often is—pretentious, obscure, and esoteric terminology used to give an air of profundity, authority, and prestige to speakers and their subject matter. Jargon as doublespeak often makes the simple appear complex, the ordinary profound, the obvious insightful. In this sense it is used not to express but impress. With such doublespeak, the act of smelling something becomes "organoleptic analysis," glass becomes "fused silicate," a crack in a metal support beam becomes a "discontinuity," conservative economic policies become "distributionally conservative notions."

10 Lawyers, for example, speak of an "involuntary conversion" of property when discussing the loss or destruction of property through theft, accident, or condemnation. If your house burns down or if your car is stolen, you have suffered an involuntary conversion of your property. When used by lawyers in a legal situation, such jargon is a legitimate use of language, since lawyers can be expected to understand the term.

11 However, when a member of a specialized group uses its jargon to communicate with a person outside the group, and uses it knowing that the nonmember

does not understand such language, then there is doublespeak. For example, on May 9, 1978, a National Airlines 727 airplane crashed while attempting to land at the Pensacola, Florida airport. Three of the fifty-two passengers aboard the airplane were killed. As a result of the crash, National made an after-tax insurance benefit of $1.7 million, or an extra 18¢ a share dividend for its stockholders. Now National Airlines had two problems: It did not want to talk about one of its airplanes crashing, and it had to account for the $1.7 million when it issued its annual report to its stockholders. National solved the problem by inserting a footnote in its annual report which explained that the $1.7 million income was due to "the involuntary conversion of a 727." National thus acknowledged the crash of its airplane and the subsequent profit it made from the crash, without once mentioning the accident or the deaths. However, because airline officials knew that most stockholders in the company, and indeed most of the general public, were not familiar with legal jargon, the use of such jargon constituted doublespeak.

Third Kind of Doublespeak

A third kind of doublespeak is gobbledygook or bureaucratese. Basically, such 12
doublespeak is simply a matter of piling on words, of overwhelming the audience with words, the bigger the words and the longer the sentences the better. Alan Greenspan, then chair of President Nixon's Council of Economic Advisors, was quoted in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1974 as having testified before a Senate committee that "It is a tricky problem to find the particular calibration in timing that would be appropriate to stem the acceleration in risk premiums created by falling incomes without prematurely aborting the decline in the inflation-generated risk premiums."

Nor has Mr. Greenspan's language changed since then. Speaking to the 13
meeting of the Economic Club of New York in 1988, Mr. Greenspan, now Federal Reserve chair, said, "I guess I should warn you, if I turn out to be particularly clear, you've probably misunderstood what I've said." Mr. Green span's doublespeak doesn't seem to have held back his career.

Sometimes gobbledygook may sound impressive, but when the quote is later 14
examined in print it doesn't even make sense. During the 1988 presidential campaign, vice-presidential candidate Senator Dan Quayle explained the need for a strategic-defense initiative by saying, "Why wouldn't an enhanced deterrent, a more stable peace, a better prospect to denying the ones who enter conflict in the first place to have a reduction of offensive systems and an introduction to defense capability? I believe this is the route the country will eventually go."

The investigation into the Challenger disaster in 1986 revealed the dou- 15
blespeak of gobbledygook and bureaucratese used by too many involved in the shuttle program. When Jesse Moore, NASA's associate administrator, was asked if the performance of the shuttle program had improved with each launch or if it had remained the same, he answered, "I think our performance in terms of the liftoff performance and in terms of the orbital performance, we knew more about the envelope we were operating under, and we have been pretty accurately staying in that. And so I would say the performance has not by design drastically improved. I think we have been able to characterize the performance more as a function of our launch experience as opposed to it improving as a function of time." While this language may appear to be jargon, a close look will reveal that it is really just gobbledygook

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laced with jargon. But you really have to wonder if Mr. Moore had any idea what he was saying.

Fourth Kind of Doublespeak

16 The fourth kind of doublespeak is inflated language that is designed to make the ordinary seem extraordinary; to make everyday things seem impressive; to give an air of importance to people, situations, or things that would not normally be considered important; to make the simple seem complex. Often this kind of doublespeak isn't hard to spot, and it is usually pretty funny. While car mechanics may be called "automotive internists," elevator operators members of the "vertical transportation corps," used cars "pre-owned" or "experienced cars," and black-and-white television sets described as having "non-multicolor capability," you really aren't misled all that much by such language.

17 However, you may have trouble figuring out that, when Chrysler "initiates a career alternative enhancement program," it is really laying off five thousand workers; or that "negative patient care outcome" means the patient died; or that "rapid oxidation" means a fire in a nuclear power plant.

18 The doublespeak of inflated language can have serious consequences. In Pentagon doublespeak, "pre-emptive counterattack" means that American forces attacked first; "engaged the enemy on all sides" means American troops were ambushed; "backloading of augmentation personnel" means a retreat by American troops. In the doublespeak of the military, the 1983 invasion of Grenada was conducted not by the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines, but by the "Caribbean Peace Keeping Forces." But then, according to the Pentagon, it wasn't an invasion, it was a "predawn vertical insertion.". . .

THE DANGERS OF DOUBLESPEAK

19 These . . . examples of doublespeak should make it clear that doublespeak is not the product of carelessness or sloppy thinking. Indeed, most doublespeak is the product of clear thinking and is carefully designed and constructed to appear to communicate when in fact it doesn't. It is language designed not to lead but mislead. It is language designed to distort reality and corrupt thought. . . . When a fire in a nuclear reactor building is called "rapid oxidation," an explosion in a nuclear power plant is called an "energetic disassembly," the illegal overthrow of a legitimate government is termed "destabilizing a government," and lies are seen as "inoperative statements," we are hearing doublespeak that attempts to avoid responsibility and make the bad seem good, the negative appear positive, something unpleasant appear attractive; and which seems to communicate but doesn't. It is language designed to alter our perception of reality and corrupt our thinking. Such language does not provide us with the tools we need to develop, advance, and preserve our culture and our civilization. Such language breeds suspicion, cynicism, distrust, and, ultimately, hostility.

cynicism
scornful distrust of others' motives

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and thesis. Where is the thesis located?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: Into what major groups is "doublespeak" classified?

3. Why does the author begin paragraph 3 with a question? What purpose does the question serve?
4. In paragraph 5, the author defines euphemisms by negation (telling what doublespeak is not and then what it is). Why do you think the author discusses this point?
5. How well does the author use the pattern of development (POD) of illustration? Choose two examples from any paragraph and explain how they help the author make his point.
6. Comment on the conclusion: lead, summary, and expanded thought.
7. Discuss the following questions in a group; assign one member to take notes. Can you think of instances in your own life when you have used euphemisms to spare someone's feelings? Can you think of any deceptive "doublespeak" terms that are currently in use? For example, the term *extraordinary rendition* refers to the practice of sending prisoners from one country to another, usually to subject them to *enhanced interrogation,* meaning "torture."



A Healthy Drink? Try Plain Water

BY TEMMA EHRENFELD

Conservation in Context

In the web-exclusive *Newsweek* article "A Healthy Drink? Try Plain Water," Temma Ehrenfeld discusses claims made by manufacturers of certain bottled waters. Notice how the author reveals her purpose several times in her introduction and offers evidence to support her position in every paragraph of the article. How do you feel about "enhanced" water? Do you drink it? Do you believe the claims made or implied by its manufacturers?



Bottled water isn't any better for you than tap water in American cities— 1
and even the bottled water industry won't argue the point. But what about the new "enhanced" waters containing vitamins and herbs? Their snappy names and lists of additives do imply health benefits beyond the goal of staying well-hydrated. Unfortunately, the science behind them is weak, according to the Center for Science in the Public interest, an advocacy group for information on nutrition. So before you load the cooler with pricey vitamin-enhanced waters, consider filling up empties at the tap instead. There are better ways to relax, get refreshed and boost your immunity than by downing the enhanced waters below:

1. Calming Waters? Coca Cola's VitaminWater B-Relaxed Jackfruit-Guava 2
contains several vitamins B and theanine, a natural ingredient in tea, along with 125 calories' worth of sugar per bottle. According to a Coca-Cola spokesperson, theanine levels of 50 mg to 200 mg have been shown to stimulate the "production of alpha brain waves, which are associated with a relaxed state of mental alertness." A 20-fluid-ounce bottle contains 50 mg of theanine, compared to 20 mg in a cup of tea. Coca-Cola also notes that the vitamins B in its product help the body fight stress. However, there is no evidence those vitamins are experienced as calming, says CSPI. And according to the most recent study of theanine, reported in the journal *Psychopharmacology*, it also does not affect mood. (Theanine does counter temporary rises in blood pressure caused by caffeine.) Buyers note: Despite the name, the product does not contain actual jackfruit or guava, only flavors.

immunity
being insusceptible to a disease (or similar)

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3 **2. Can Water Stave Off Colds?** Coca Cola's Dasani Plus Defend + Protect contains zinc and vitamin E, two substances that play a role in immunity. However, according to the CSPI, research suggests that taking vitamin E boosts immunity only if it is consumed in very large amounts by older people who are deficient in the vitamin. Some evidence suggests that zinc lozenges may shorten colds. But that doesn't mean drinking zinc in water will, says CSPI, and, as Coca-Cola points out, there aren't any studies "using water fortified with zinc to determine the effect on colds."

4 **3. Getting Tough on H_2O?** Pepsi-Co's Sobe Life Water Challenge Your Life provides taurine, sometimes touted as a muscle strengthener, and ginseng, believed to boost alertness. The science: Participants in one study took 20 grams a day of taurine for seven days, and did a pushup test before and after. Taurine didn't make them any better at pushups. As for ginseng, the evidence that it boosts alertness is inconsistent, says CSPI—in fact, it appears to reduce alertness under some circumstances. Dosages count. But the Sobe label doesn't say how much taurine or ginseng is in its product, and Sobe did not provide the information to *Newsweek* when asked. A spokeswoman says, "We allow customers to decide what 'challenge' means to them."

5 **4. Fiber Water?** Pepsi-Co's Aquafina Alive Satisfy does contain maltodextrin, which qualifies under the government definition of fiber. However, it's a soluble fiber, so it won't keep you regular like the fiber in grains and beans.

soluble
dissolves in water

THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and thesis. What do you think the author's main purpose is: to inform, entertain, or persuade her audience?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: What are three instances of development by cause and effect?
3. What SOP does Ehrenfeld use to group bottled water, and into how many major groups is bottled water classified?
4. What body paragraph uses comparison as one means of development?
5. What evidence in each body paragraph does the author offer to refute claims made by bottled water manufacturers?
6. Has the author persuaded you to accept her thesis—why or why not?
7. Bottled water is an environmental issue, too. Read each of the following articles and write a paragraph classifying arguments against and for bottled water:
   - "In Praise of Tap Water": http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/01/opinion/01wed2.html
   - "Back to the Tap": http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1651523,00.html
   - "Bottled Water Paradox: Banned, and Required": http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/14/nyregion/14about.html?ex=1368504000&en=d724c08fd9347495&ei=5124&partner=permalink&exprod=permalink
   - "The Pros and Cons of Bottled Water": http://www.helium.com/items/100020-the-pros-and-cons-of-bottled-water



Definition

Ambition

BY PERRI KLASS

To define is to limit the meaning of something, especially to discover its essential qualities. Dr. Perri Klass does this in the following essay from *Self* magazine, exploring the concept of *ambition*. She lets us see both the positive and negative aspects of the term and clarifies what ambition means to her and why it is important to her. As in all essays, the author uses a mix of PODs, leaning especially toward illustration and causes and effects. Notice, as you read, how much the author reveals about her life—she is a pediatrician, mother, writer, dreamer, and hard worker; she is also someone who feels guilt, envy, and confusion. Does this personal approach to writing make you more or less inclined to read Klass's work? Why?



HINT

For detailed coverage of definition, see Chapter 28.

In college, my friend Beth was very ambitious, not only for herself but for her friends. She was interested in foreign relations, in travel, in going to law school. "I plan to be secretary of state someday," she would say matter-of-factly. One mutual friend was studying literature, planning to go to graduate school; he would be the chairman of the Yale English department. Another friend was interested in political journalism and would someday edit *Time* magazine. I was a biology major, which was a problem: Beth's best friend from childhood was also studying biology, and Beth had already decided *she* would win the Nobel Prize. This was resolved by my interest in writing fiction. I would win *that* Nobel, while her other friend would win for science. 1

It was a joke; we were all smart-ass college freshmen, pretending the world was ours for the asking. But it was not entirely a joke. We were *smart* college freshmen, and why should we limit our ambitions? 2

I've always liked ambitious people, and many of my closest friends have had grandiose dreams. I like such people, not because I am desperate to be buddies with a future secretary of state but because I find ambitious people entertaining, interesting to talk to, fun to watch. And, of course, I like such people because I am ambitious myself, and I would rather not feel apologetic about it. 3

Ambition has gotten bad press. Back in the seventeenth century, Spinoza thought ambition and lust were "nothing but species of madness, although they are not enumerated among diseases." Especially in women, ambition has often been seen as a profoundly dislikable quality; the word "ambitious" linked to a "career woman" suggested that she was ruthless, hard as nails, clawing her way to success on top of the bleeding bodies of her friends. 4

profoundly
deeply

Then, in the late Seventies and the Eighties, ambition became desirable, as books with titles like *How to Stomp Your Way to Success* became bestsellers. It was still a nasty sort of attribute, but nasty attributes were good because they helped you look out for number one. 5

attribute
trait

But what I mean by ambition is dreaming big dreams, putting no limits on your expectations and your hopes. I don't really like very specific, attainable ambitions, the kind you learn to set in the career-strategy course taught by the author of *How to Stomp Your Way to Success*. I like big ambitions that suggest that the world could open up at any time, with work and luck and 6

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determination. The next book could hit it big. The next research project could lead to something fantastic. The next bright idea could change history.

7 Of course, eventually you have to stop being a freshman in college. You limit your ambitions and become more realistic, wiser about your potential, your abilities, the number of things your life can hold. Sometimes you get close to something you wanted to do, only to find it looks better from far away. Back when I was a freshman, to tell the truth, I wanted to be Jane Goodall, go into the jungle to study monkeys and learn things no one had ever dreamed of. This ambition was based on an interest in biology and several *National Geographic* television specials; it turned out that wasn't enough of a basis for a life. There were a number of other early ambitions that didn't pan out either. I was not fated to live a wild, adventurous life, to travel alone to all the most exotic parts of the world, to leave behind a string of broken hearts. Oh well, you have to grow up, at least a little.

Jane Goodall
famous chimpanzee expert

8 One of the worst things ambition can do is tell you you're a failure. The world is full of measuring tapes, books and articles to tell you where you should be at your age, after so-and-so many years of doing what you do.

9 Almost all of us have to deal with the tremendous success of friends (or enemies), with those who somehow started out where we did but are now way in front. My college-alumni magazine arrives every two months without fail, so I can find out who graduated two years *after* I did but is now running a groundbreaking clinic at a major university hospital (and I'm only just finishing my residency!). Who is restoring a fabulous mansion in a highly desirable town by the sea. Who got promoted yet again, due to natural brilliance and industry.

10 I read an article recently about how one's twenties are the decade for deciding on a career and finishing your training, and the thirties are for consolidating your success and rising within your chosen job (and here I am in my thirties, not even sure what I want to do yet!). With all these external yardsticks, the last thing anyone needs is an internal voice as well, whispering irritably that you were supposed to do it better, get further and that all you've actually accomplished is mush, since you haven't met your own goals.

11 The world is full of disappointed people. Some of them probably never had much ambition to start with; they sat back and waited for something good and feel cheated because it never happened. Some of them had very set, specific ambitions and, for one reason or another, never got what they wanted. Others got what they wanted but found it wasn't exactly what they'd expected it to be. Disappointed ambition provides fodder for both drama and melodrama: aspiring athletes (who coulda been contenders), aspiring dancers (all they ever needed was the music and the mirror).

fodder
raw material

12 The world is also full of people so ambitious, so consumed by drive and overdrive that nothing they pass on the way to success has any value at all. Life becomes one long exercise in delayed gratification; everything you do, you're doing only because it will one day get you where you want to be. Medical training is an excellent example of delayed gratification. You spend years in medical school doing things with no obvious relationship to your future as a doctor, and then you spend years in residency, living life on a miserable schedule, staying up all night and slogging through the day, telling

slogging
plodding, slow-moving

yourself that one day all this will be over. It's what you have to do to become a doctor, but it's a lousy model for life in general. There's nothing wrong with a little delayed gratification every now and then, but a job you do only because of where it will get you—and not because you like it—means a life of muttering to yourself, "Someday this will be over." This is bad for the disposition.

disposition
general mood or outlook

13 As you grow up, your ambitions may come into conflict. Most prominently nowadays, we have to hear about Women Torn Between Family and Career, about women who make it to the top only to realize they left their ovaries behind. Part of growing up, of course, is realizing that there is only so much room in one life, whether you are male or female. You can do one thing wholeheartedly and single-mindedly and give up some other things. Or you can be greedy and grab for something new without wanting to give up what you already have. This leads to a chaotic and crowded life in which you are always late, always overdue, always behind, but rarely bored. Even so, you have to come to terms with limitations; you cannot crowd your life with occupations and then expect to do each one as well as you might if it were all you had to do. I realize this when I race out of the hospital, offending a senior doctor who had offered to explain something to me, only to arrive late at the daycare center, annoying the people who have been taking care of my daughter.

14 People consumed by ambition, living with ambition, get to be a little humorless, a little one-sided. On the other hand, people who completely abrogate their ambition aren't all fun and games either. I've met a certain number of women whose ambitions are no longer for themselves at all; their lives are now dedicated to their offspring. I hope my children grow up to be nice people, smart people, people who use good grammar; and I hope they grow up to find things they love to do, and do well. But my ambitions are still for *me*.

abrogate
to do away with

15 Of course, I try to be mature about it all. I don't assign my friends Nobel Prizes or top government posts. I don't pretend that there is room in my life for any and every kind of ambition I can imagine. Instead, I say piously that all I want are three things: I want to write as well as I can, I want to have a family and I want to be a good pediatrician. And then, of course, a voice inside whispers . . . to write a bestseller, to have ten children, to do stunning medical research. Fame and fortune, it whispers, fame and fortune. Even though I'm not a college freshman anymore, I'm glad to find that little voice still there, whispering sweet nothings in my ear.

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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and thesis. How many paragraphs are in the introduction? Is the thesis clearly stated or implied? In which paragraph is it located?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: what image in paragraph 4 is created through descriptive details?
3. In what paragraph does the author give her personal definition of ambition? How does she use negation (saying something is not this, but this) to clarify her meaning?
4. What is the topic sentence in paragraph 7? What POD does Klass use to develop it?



5. What is the topic sentence in paragraph 11? What POD does the author use to develop it?
6. The author uses understatement (downplaying the serious nature of a statement) at the end of paragraph 12, hyperbole (exaggeration) at the start of paragraph 13, and personification (giving human characteristics to things and animals) at the end of her final paragraph. Comment on what effect she achieves with these figures of speech.
7. In small groups, discuss how each member would describe ambition. Is it a positive or negative term for you? In a paragraph, compare or contrast your definition with a classmate's.

Instant Expert: Climate Change

BY FRED PEARCE



The next article, "Instant Expert: Climate Change," appeared in the online edition of the British magazine *New Scientist* in September 2006. In it, Fred Pearce defines *climate change*, helping us to understand this concept primarily through its effects on the planet but also by discussing its causes and the process by which climate change happens. Notice how the author uses parentheses to indicate abbreviations for certain words (carbon dioxide = CO_2) and then uses the abbreviation for clarity and concision.

1 Climate change is with us. A decade ago, it was conjecture. Now the future is unfolding before our eyes. Canada's Inuit see it in disappearing Arctic ice and permafrost. The shantytown dwellers of Latin America and Southern Asia see it in lethal storms and floods. Europeans see it in disappearing glaciers, forest fires and fatal heat waves.

conjecture
guessing

2 Scientists see it in tree rings, ancient coral and bubbles trapped in ice cores. These reveal that the world has not been as warm as it is now for a millennium or more. The three warmest years on record have all occurred since 1998; 19 of the warmest 20 since 1980. And Earth has probably never warmed as fast as in the past 30 years—a period when natural influences on global temperatures, such as solar cycles and volcanoes, should have cooled us down. Studies of the thermal inertia of the oceans suggest that there is more warming in the pipeline.

inertia
inactivity, retaining a state of rest

3 Climatologists reporting for the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) say we are seeing global warming caused by human activities and there are growing fears of feedbacks that will accelerate this warming.

GLOBAL GREENHOUSE

4 People are causing the change by burning nature's vast stores of coal, oil and natural gas. This releases billions of metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO_2) every year, although the changes may actually have started with the dawn of agriculture, say some scientists.

5 The physics of the "greenhouse effect" has been a matter of scientific fact for a century. CO_2 is a greenhouse gas that traps the Sun's radiation within the troposphere, the lower atmosphere. It has accumulated along with other man-made greenhouse gases, such as methane and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

pre-industrial
before the Industrial Era, or mid to late 18th century

6 If current trends continue, we will raise atmospheric CO_2 concentrations to double pre-industrial levels during this century. That will probably be enough to raise global temperatures by around 2ºC to 5ºC. Some warming is

certain, but the degree will be determined by feedbacks involving melting ice, the oceans, water vapor, clouds and changes to vegetation.

Warming is bringing other unpredictable changes. Melting glaciers and precipitation are causing some rivers to overflow, while evaporation is emptying others. Diseases are spreading. Some crops grow faster while others see yields slashed by disease and drought. Strong hurricanes are becoming more frequent and destructive. Arctic sea ice is melting faster every year, and there are growing fears of a shutdown of the ocean currents that keep Europe warm for its latitude. Clashes over dwindling water resources may cause conflicts in many regions. 7

As natural ecosystems—such as coral reefs—are disrupted, biodiversity is reduced. Most species cannot migrate fast enough to keep up, though others are already evolving in response to warming. 8

Thermal expansion of the oceans, combined with melting ice on land, is also raising sea levels. In this century, human activity could trigger an irreversible melting of the Greenland ice sheet and Antarctic glaciers. This would condemn the world to a rise in sea level of six meters—enough to flood land occupied by billions of people. 9

six meters
approximately 20 feet

The global warming would be more pronounced if it were not for sulfur particles and other pollutants that shade us, and because forests and oceans absorb around half of the CO_2 we produce. But the accumulation rate of atmospheric CO_2 has increased since 2001, suggesting that nature's ability to absorb the gas could now be stretched to the limit. Recent research suggests that natural CO_2 "sinks," like peat bogs and forests, are actually starting to release CO_2. 10

"sinks"
collectors of CO_2

DEEPER CUTS

At the Earth Summit in 1992, the world agreed to prevent "dangerous" climate change. The first step was the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which finally came into force during 2005. It will bring modest emission reductions from industrialized countries. But many observers say deeper cuts are needed and developing nations, which have large and growing populations, will one day have to join in. 11

Kyoto Protocol
international treaty to limit CO_2 emissions.

Some, including the U.S. Bush administration, say the scientific uncertainty over the pace of climate change is grounds for delaying action. The U.S. and Australia have reneged on Kyoto. During 2005 these countries, and others, suggested "clean fuel" technologies as an alternative to emissions cuts. 12

In any case, according to the IPCC, the world needs to quickly improve the efficiency of its energy usage and develop renewable non-carbon fuels like: wind, solar, tidal, wave and perhaps nuclear power. It also means developing new methods of converting this clean energy into motive power, like hydrogen fuel cells for cars. Trading in Kyoto carbon permits may help. 13

Other less conventional solutions include ideas to stave off warming by "mega-engineering" the planet with giant mirrors to deflect the Sun's rays, seeding the oceans with iron to generate algal blooms, or burying greenhouse gases below the sea. 14

The bottom line is that we will need to cut CO_2 emissions by 70% to 80% simply to stabilize atmospheric CO_2 concentrations—and thus temperatures. The quicker we do that, the less unbearably hot our future world will be. 15

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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and thesis. Why do you think the author chooses the four examples—Canada, Latin America, Southern Asia, and Europe—in his introduction?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: Name several detailed examples used to explain climate change.
3. In what paragraph does the author begin using the POD of cause and effect to help explain climate change?
4. What paragraph uses the process-description POD to help explain climate change?
5. List the effects the author mentions in developing paragraphs 7–9. What blocking cause in paragraph 10 might give the reader hope?
6. What POD does the author use in paragraphs 13 and 14 to list steps that can be taken to slow climate change? List the steps.
7. Read a recent entry from *New Scientist*'s Environment blog at http://www.newscientist.com/blog/environment/. Choose a word or phrase that is either unfamiliar or complicated and write an extended definition of it, based on its context in the entry.



HINT

For a more detailed discussion of persuasion, see Chapter 29.

Persuasion

Persuasive writing and speaking pay close attention to the particular *audience* the writer hopes to move to some mental or physical action. The most persuasive writing or speaking also clarifies the *issue* at hand, takes a *position*, offers *reasons* supported by *evidence*, and deals with *opposing reasons* and *objections*.

Conservation in Context

Nobel Lecture 2007

BY AL GORE

In the following argument, an excerpt from a Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Al Gore addresses an immediate audience that is receptive to his message, but he also speaks to a worldwide audience, many of whom may be skeptical about the notion of global warming. Gore is, therefore, careful to recap points about global warming—its causes and effects—that many know about but others do not. Gore realizes that he must appeal to his global audience by giving specific evidence and overcoming the objections of skeptics.



1 Today, we dumped another 70 million tons of global-warming pollution into the thin shell of atmosphere surrounding our planet, as if it were an open sewer. And tomorrow, we will dump a slightly larger amount, with the cumulative concentrations now trapping more and more heat from the sun.

2 As a result, the earth has a fever. And the fever is rising. The experts have told us it is not a passing affliction that will heal by itself. We asked for a second opinion. And a third. And a fourth. And the consistent conclusion, restated with increasing alarm, is that something basic is wrong.

3 We are what is wrong, and we must make it right.

Last September 21, as the Northern Hemisphere tilted away from the sun, scientists reported with unprecedented distress that the North Polar ice cap is "falling off a cliff." One study estimated that it could be completely gone during summer in less than 22 years. Another new study, to be presented by U.S. Navy researchers later this week, warns it could happen in as little as 7 years. 4

Seven years from now. 5

In the last few months, it has been harder and harder to misinterpret the signs that our world is spinning out of kilter. Major cities in North and South America, Asia and Australia are nearly out of water due to massive droughts and melting glaciers. Desperate farmers are losing their livelihoods. Peoples in the frozen Arctic and on low-lying Pacific islands are planning evacuations of places they have long called home. Unprecedented wildfires have forced a half million people from their homes in one country and caused a national emergency that almost brought down the government in another. Climate refugees have migrated into areas already inhabited by people with different cultures, religions, and traditions, increasing the potential for conflict. Stronger storms in the Pacific and Atlantic have threatened whole cities. Millions have been displaced by massive flooding in South Asia, Mexico, and 18 countries in Africa. As temperature extremes have increased, tens of thousands have lost their lives. We are recklessly burning and clearing our forests and driving more and more species into extinction. The very web of life on which we depend is being ripped and frayed. 6

We never intended to cause all this destruction, just as Alfred Nobel never intended that dynamite be used for waging war. He had hoped his invention would promote human progress. We shared that same worthy goal when we began burning massive quantities of coal, then oil and methane. 7

Even in Nobel's time, there were a few warnings of the likely consequences. One of the very first winners of the Prize in chemistry worried that, "We are evaporating our coal mines into the air." After performing 10,000 equations by hand, Svante Arrhenius calculated that the earth's average temperature would increase by many degrees if we doubled the amount of CO_2 in the atmosphere. . . . 8

But unlike most other forms of pollution, CO_2 is invisible, tasteless, and odorless—which has helped keep the truth about what it is doing to our climate out of sight and out of mind. Moreover, the catastrophe now threatening us is unprecedented—and we often confuse the unprecedented with the improbable. . . . 9

unprecedented
has never happened before

improbable
unlikely to occur

Indeed, without realizing it, we have begun to wage war on the earth itself. Now, we and the earth's climate are locked in a relationship familiar to war planners: "Mutually assured destruction." 10

More than two decades ago, scientists calculated that nuclear war could throw so much debris and smoke into the air that it would block life-giving sunlight from our atmosphere, causing a "nuclear winter." Their eloquent warnings here in Oslo helped galvanize the world's resolve to halt the nuclear arms race. 11

galvanize
to startle into activity

Now science is warning us that if we do not quickly reduce the global warming pollution that is trapping so much of the heat our planet normally 12

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radiates back out of the atmosphere, we are in danger of creating a permanent "carbon summer."

13 As the American poet Robert Frost wrote, "Some say the world will end in fire; some say in ice." Either, he notes, "would suffice."

14 But neither need be our fate. It is time to make peace with the planet.

15 We must quickly mobilize our civilization with the urgency and resolve that has previously been seen only when nations mobilized for war. These prior struggles for survival were won when leaders found words at the 11th hour that released a mighty surge of courage, hope and readiness to sacrifice for a protracted and mortal challenge.

11th hour
at the last moment

protracted
drawn out, prolonged

16 These were not comforting and misleading assurances that the threat was not real or imminent; that it would affect others but not ourselves; that ordinary life might be lived even in the presence of extraordinary threat; that Providence could be trusted to do for us what we would not do for ourselves.

17 No, these were calls to come to the defense of the common future. They were calls upon the courage, generosity and strength of entire peoples, citizens of every class and condition who were ready to stand against the threat once asked to do so. Our enemies in those times calculated that free people would not rise to the challenge; they were, of course, catastrophically wrong.

18 Now comes the threat of climate crisis—a threat that is real, rising, imminent, and universal. Once again, it is the 11th hour. The penalties for ignoring this challenge are immense and growing, and at some near point would be unsustainable and unrecoverable. For now we still have the power to choose our fate, and the remaining question is only this: Have we the will to act vigorously and in time, or will we remain imprisoned by a dangerous illusion? . . .

19 We must abandon the conceit that individual, isolated, private actions are the answer. They can and do help. But they will not take us far enough without collective action. At the same time, we must ensure that in mobilizing globally, we do not invite the establishment of ideological conformity and a new lock-step "ism."

ideology
a set of doctrines or beliefs

20 That means adopting principles, values, laws, and treaties that release creativity and initiative at every level of society in multifold responses originating concurrently and spontaneously.

21 This new consciousness requires expanding the possibilities inherent in all humanity. The innovators who will devise a new way to harness the sun's energy for pennies or invent an engine that's carbon negative may live in Lagos or Mumbai or Montevideo. We must ensure that entrepreneurs and inventors everywhere on the globe have the chance to change the world.

entrepreneurs
those who undertake business ventures

22 When we unite for a moral purpose that is manifestly good and true, the spiritual energy unleashed can transform us. The generation that defeated fascism throughout the world in the 1940s found, in rising to meet their awesome challenge, that they had gained the moral authority and long-term vision to launch the Marshall Plan, the United Nations, and a new level of global cooperation and foresight that unified Europe and facilitated the emergence of democracy and prosperity in Germany, Japan, Italy and much of the world. One of their visionary leaders said, "It is time we steered by the stars and not by the lights of every passing ship." . . .

In the Kanji characters used in both Chinese and Japanese, "crisis" is written with two symbols, the first meaning "danger," the second "opportunity." By facing and removing the danger of the climate crisis, we have the opportunity to gain the moral authority and vision to vastly increase our own capacity to solve other crises that have been too long ignored. 23

We must understand the connections between the climate crisis and the afflictions of poverty, hunger, HIV-AIDS and other pandemics. As these problems are linked, so too must be their solutions. We must begin by making the common rescue of the global environment the central organizing principle of the world community. . . . 24

The pace of our response must be accelerated to match the accelerating pace of the crisis itself. . . . 25

The great Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen, wrote, "One of these days, the younger generation will come knocking at my door." 26

The future is knocking at our door right now. Make no mistake, the next generation will ask us one of two questions. Either they will ask: "What were you thinking; why didn't you act?" 27

Or they will ask instead: "How did you find the moral courage to rise and successfully resolve a crisis that so many said was impossible to solve?" 28

We have everything we need to get started, save perhaps political will, but political will is a renewable resource. 29

So let us renew it, and say together: "We have a purpose. We are many. For this purpose we will rise, and we will act." 30

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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction (paragraphs 1–3): hook, development, and thesis. What simile is used, and what is personified in the introduction? In what paragraph is the thesis located?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: In which one does Gore begin to offer evidence of global warming?
3. What is the intended effect on the audience of the sentence fragment that is paragraph 5? Notice that it merely repeats a part of the previous sentence.
4. What is the major POD that Gore uses to develop paragraph 6? What is the effect on the reader of this much evidence being presented so compactly in a single paragraph?
5. Why does Gore point out in paragraph 9 that CO_2 is "invisible, tasteless, and odorless"?
6. In paragraph 15 Gore begins an extended metaphor that compares people's struggle with global warming to a world war. What does he say has been people's response during wars of the past, and what should people do in response to this global-warming war now?
7. Read about Al Gore's (and SOS's) Live Earth Concerts for a Climate in Crisis at http://www.liveearth.org/event.php. Is an internationally broadcast concert a powerful and persuasive platform for combating climate change? Why or why not? Write a paragraph-long letter to SOS arguing for another Live Earth concert or, alternately, for a different type of awareness event.



The Semantics of Murder

BY AMIR TAHERI



The next selection appeared as an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal* in May 2002. In it Amir Taheri argues that Islam does not condone suicide bombings, despite the attempts of various politicians to convince both Muslims and non-Muslims that it does. Notice the reasons that Taheri offers, carefully supported by evidence drawn from the religion of Islam. Also, note Taheri's logical interpretation of evidence as he points out that his opposition must turn to newly coined words to support their own claims of religious sanction for suicide bombings.

1 As President Bush and Israel's prime minister, Ariel Sharon, met in Washington on May 7, 2002, the latest mass murder rocked Tel Aviv. A blast in a pool hall killed at least 16 people and wounded at least 57 others. So, will the Palestinian who here turned himself into a walking agent of destruction be regarded by his people as a "suicide bomber," a "terrorist" or a "martyr"?

martyr
one who sacrifices oneself for a cause

2 Many in the West assume that the Muslim world has already answered by honoring the human bombs as "martyrs." And the chorus of voices from the Muslim world does support that assumption. Foreign ministers from 57 Muslim countries met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, this month with the stated intention of defining terrorism and distancing Islam from terror. Instead, they ended up endorsing the suicide bombers.

3 Iran's former president, Hashemi Rafsanjani, says he would accept the suicide of even 10% of Muslims in a nuclear war to wipe Israel off the map. Algeria's president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, has described the bombers as "innocent blossoms of martyrdom." Ghazi Algosaibi, Saudi Arabia's ambassador in London and also a poet, has praised the human bombs as a model for Muslim youth in an ode. Ismail Abushanab, the Hamas leader in Gaza, says that 10,000 Palestinians should die while killing 100,000 Israelis as part of a strategy to "put the Jews on the run." And Saddam Hussein says the suicide bombers are "reviving Islam."

4 Many Arab television channels have enlisted their resources in the battle for the hearts and minds of the Arab world, presenting self-styled sheikhs who use sophistry to bestow religious authority on a cynical political strategy. But even these apologists of terror find it difficult to justify the bombers in terms of Islamic ethics.

sophistry
a false argument

apologist
one who defends or supports

5 The first difficulty they face is that Islam expressly forbids suicide. Islamic ethics underlines five "unpardonable sins": cannibalism, murder, incest, rape and suicide. The rationale is that these are evil deeds that cannot be undone. To avoid such awkwardness, the apologists of terror recently abandoned the term *entehari* ("suicidal") which was coined for human bombs when they first appeared in Lebanon in 1983.

6 The apologists also know that they cannot use the term *shahid* for the men who self-detonate in civilian areas. This is a complex term. Although it also means "martyr," it must not be confused with the Christian concept of martyrdom. In Islam, Allah himself is the first shahid, meaning "witness" to the unity of creation. The word indicates that individuals cannot decide to become martyrs—that choice belongs only to God.

lofty
high

7 But this is a lofty honor. There are no more than a dozen or so "shahids" in the history of Islam—people who fell in loyal battle in defense of the faith,

not in pursuit of political goals. By becoming shahid they bore testimony to the truth of God's message. The Palestinian teenager who says in video-recorded testament that he or she has decided to become a martyr is, in fact, challenging one of Allah's prerogatives.

prerogative exclusive rights or privilege

To get around the semantics, terror's apologists now use the word *etsesh' had*, which literally means "affidavit." As a neologism, it means conducting "martyr-like" operations. Thus "martyr-like," the ersatz in place of the real, is used to circumvent the impossibility of regarding suicide bombers as martyrs in Islam. 8

neologism a new word or interpretation

Muslims who implicitly condone terror know they cannot smuggle a new concept into Islamic ethics, where human activities are divided into six categories along a spectrum of good and evil. Most activities fall into a gray area, half of which is described as *mobah* (acceptable though not praiseworthy), the other half as *makruh* (acceptable though best avoided). 9

implicit implied or understood, but not stated outright

Suicide bombing falls within the category that is forbidden (*haram*). To change its status as a concept, its supporters must give a definition (*ta'rif*), spell out its rules (*ahkam*), fix its limits (hodoud), find its place in jurisprudence (*shar'e*) and common law (*urf*). Such an undertaking would require a large measure of consensus (*ijma'a*) among the believers, something the prophets of terror will never sccure. And not a single reputable theologian anywhere has endorsed the new trick word *estesh'had*, though some have spoken with forked tongues. The reason is not hard to see. 10

theologian religious leader

Islam forbids human sacrifice. The greatest Islamic festival is the Eid al-Adha which marks the day God refused Abraham's offer to sacrifice his first-born and, instead, substituted a lamb. A god who refuses human sacrifice for his cause can hardly sanction the same to promote the strategies of Mr. Abushanab, or Yasser Arafat. Islam also rejects the crucifixion of Christ because it cannot accept that God would claim human sacrifice in atonement of men's sins. 11

atonement payment, amends

Some, like Iran's President Mohammad Khatami, present suicide bombings as acts of individual desperation. This is disingenuous. One of the girls who blew herself up, murdering almost a dozen Israelis, had been recruited at 14 and brainwashed for two years. Mounting a suicide operation needs planning, logistics, surveillance, equipment, money and postoperation publicity—in short, an organization. 12

disingenuous crafty, shading the truth

But then, the recruiters never use their own children. No one related by blood to the leaders of Hamas or Islamic Jihad has died in suicide bombings. 13

Arafat' wife, Suha, says she would offer her son for suicide attacks. Mrs. Arafat, however, has no son, only a daughter, living with her in Paris. It is always someone else's child who must die. 14

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THINKING ABOUT THE MODEL

1. Comment on the introduction: hook, development, and thesis. In what paragraph is the thesis located?
2. Comment on the development of body paragraphs: What is the author's purpose in paragraphs 2–4 in detailing some Muslims' reaction to suicide bombings?



3. In which paragraph does the author state his first reason for supporting his thesis? Is this the topic sentence of the paragraph?
4. What strategy of argument does Taheri use in paragraph 12? Does he use it effectively, and how?
5. Is the author's persona persuasive to you? Name three elements in this argument that encourage you to believe the author.
6. Paragraphs 13 and 14 bring the editorial to a conclusion. What is the author's final point? How does it support his position?
7. Compose a response to Taheri's editorial; consider that he and his readership are your audience. Be persuasive, using specific examples to explain why you support, question, or disagree with any aspect of his argument. Then trade drafts with a partner and discuss how each of you might strengthen your argument. Use the checklist on page 436 to guide your conversation.



ONLINE READING

You can read more by or about the writers featured in Unit Seven on the following sites:

- Esmeralda Santiago: http://www.esmeraldasantiago.com/
- Annie Dillard: http://www.anniedillard.com/
- Langston Hughes: http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/83
- Elizabeth Wong: http://www.elizabethwong.net/
- Neil Shea: http://www.vqronline.org/author/5800/neil-shea/
- Richard Lederer: http://www.verbivore.com/
- David Ropeik: http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=David_P._Ropeik
- Debora Mackenzie: http://media.newscientist.com/search.ns?doSearch=true&query=debora+mackenzie
- Leslie T. Chang: http://thechinabeat.blogspot.com/
- Tim Maddux: http://www.santabarbarasurfing.com/
- Tim Appenzeller: http://sciwrite.org/sciwrite/sciwrite.appenzeller.html
- Joseph Sobran: http://www.sobran.com/
- Rebecca Murray: http://movies.about.com/mbiopage.htm
- William Lutz: http://www.sec.gov/spotlight/xbrl/2006/wlutz_bio.pdf
- Temma Ehrenfeld: http://services.newsweek.com/search.aspx?q=Author:^"temma%20ehrenfeld"$&sortDirection=descending&sortField=pubdatetime&offset=0&pageSize=10
- Perri Klass: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/physicians/biography_186.html
- Fred Pearce: http://media.newscientist.com/search.ns?doSearch=true&query=Fred+Pearce
- Al Gore: http://www.algore.com/
- Amir Taheri: http://www.benadorassociates.com/taheri.php

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p. 521, "The Struggle to be an All-American Girl" by Elizabeth Wong. Originally published in the *Los Angeles Times*, September 7, 1980. Reprinted by permission of the Author, www.elizabethwong.net.
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p. 529, "What Really Scares Us?" by David Ropeik, Mar. 30, 2004. © 2003 David Ropeik. Initially published in *Parade Magazine*. All rights reserved.
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p. 542: "Patriotism or Nationalism" by Joseph Sobran. Column released on October 16, 2001. Copyright © 2008 by the Fitzgerald Griffin Foundation, www.fgfBooks.com. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

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IMPROVEMENT CHART

Name: _____

This chart will help you track and correct errors in your major writing assignments. Chapter numbers (in parentheses) follow each error. List words that you consistently misspell or sound-alike words that cause problems in the last two columns.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Spelling	Soundalike
1. Subject/verb agreement (5)										
2. Verb tense shift (4)										
3. Verb form (4)										
4. Pronoun agreement (7)										
5. Pronoun shift (7)										
6. Pronoun case (7)										
7. Pronoun reference (7)										
8. Parallelism (13)										
9. Misplaced and dangling modifier (8)										
10. Adverb form (8)										
11. Run-on sentence (14)										
12. Comma splice (14)										
13. Sentence fragment (14)										
14. Unneeded comma (15)										
15. Comma to introduce (15)										
16. Comma to enclose/end (15)										
17. Comma to divide (15)										
18. Comma with a series (15)										
19. Comma with coordinate adjective (15)										
20. Comma for contrast (15)										
21. Comma with numbers, dates, addresses, place names, direct address (15)										
22. Semicolon (16)										
23. Quotation marks (16)										
24. Apostrophe (16)										
25. Capitalization (16)										
26. Hyphen (16)										
27. Spelling (17)										
28. Sound-alike (17)										
29. Wrong word (33)										
30. Missing word (1)										

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Abbreviations and Symbols for Revising and Editing Your Writing

(Page numbers are indicated in parentheses.)

ad	Problem with adjective or adverb *(118–130)*
agr	Problem with subject/verb agreement *(74–91)* or pronoun agreement *(101–117)*
apos	Apostrophe error *(233–234)*
cap	Capitalization error *(234–235)*
case	Pronoun case problem *(109–114)*
coh	Coherence problem *(287–291)*
:	Colon needed *(230–231)*
,	Comma needed *(213–225)*
no ,	Comma not needed *(225–227)*
cs	Comma splice *(192–203)*
dm	Dangling modifier *(127–129)*
dev	Development needed—add details *(279–280)*
frag	Sentence fragment *(203–210)*
hyph	Hyphen problem *(235)*
ital	Italics needed *(236)*
lc	Lowercase letter needed
mm	Misplaced modifier *(128–129)*
¶	Paragraph indent needed
no ¶	No paragraph indent needed
par	Parallelism problem *(181–189)*
quot	Problem with quotation marks *(233)*
ref	Pronoun reference problem *(103–105)*
ro	Run-on sentence *(192–203)*
;	Semicolon problem *(230)*
shift	Pronoun shift *(114–115)* or verb tense shift *(70–71)*
sp	Spelling error *(242–256)*
trans	Transition needed *(287–289)*
und	Underlining needed *(236)*
verb	Verb form or tense problem *(49–73)*
wordy	Too many words *(506–510)*
ww	Wrong word *(249–255)*
?	Unclear
	Delete this letter or word
^	Add a letter or word


Inspire, Write, Revise, Inspire, Write, Revise, Inspire, Write, Revise,